

**POSTCARDS FROM GOD:
Grace and the Corporate Everyday at Orlando's Holy Land Experience**



Figure 1: the author outside of the Walt Disney Corporation offices in Celebration, Florida, where he was denied access, his camera the only means of peering into and recording the space (author's photo, 2013)

by Whitten Overby

Abstract

This paper examines an Orlando, Florida Christian theme park, the Holy Land Experience, which leads pilgrims through performances that re-enact scenes from Christ's life.

I assess this corporate postmodern architecture using cultural history, historiography, and ethnography. These methodologies permitted me to consider Orlando's use of historical architecture to conceal its lack of an actual history, demonstrated how each pilgrim creates their own historiographical interpretation of the scenes before them, and made me follow these footsteps as I created my own filmic and photographic archive at once experiencing and documenting the park.

Archival questions run throughout this work because, as a copyrighted space, I was strictly forbidden to access a company archive, interview workers, or even document the park. Despite these significant setbacks and against conventional readings of such spaces as capitalist playpens, I saw the beauty of the everyday in pilgrims' experiences in the park.

About the Author

Whitten Overby grew up in Jacksonville, Florida, where he attended a college preparatory school originally used as a hotel for film stars; for two years, Jacksonville felt it was destined to be ‘the next Hollywood.’ He went to Wesleyan University, where he spent four years playing hipster. After recovering from this experience, he enrolled in Cornell University’s History of Architecture and Urbanism program. He likes yoga, low pop culture, clothes, boys, and sometimes pencils. He no longer lives in the Sunbelt but continues to write about it.

For Joshua, Diane, and Mom

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I would like to thank my chair, Medina Lasansky, for her strength and for her unwavering belief in my work. She pushed me towards a project that helped me, finally, gain an original writerly voice. Of equal importance, she encouraged a project that enabled me to pose serious questions about the sorts of things and spaces most scholars and learned citizens would consider trifling crap. By the time I matriculated to Cornell, I was sick of discussing the symbolic value of columns and other stylistic problematics. No more villas, she told me the first time we met. Thankfully, I no longer think about villas when I shower, drive, and walk about.

Chris, my other committee member on this project, is an endless fount of citations and always points me towards questions without immediate answers. He challenges my language to be less judgmental--what I actually aim to do--while also pushing me in a truly interdisciplinary direction. He, too, has encouraged me to look at the environments that many consider to be mundane, to find revelation and beauty in faith as the world around us secularizes.

Table of Contents

Preface_Taking a Stance within Architectural History	1 to 7
Introduction_Summarizing the Field	8 to 26
Chapter 1_Theming Orlando and Siting the Holy Land Experience	27 to 52
Chapter 2_Ghosts in the Scriptorium and Beyond	52 to 76
Chapter 3_The Drama of the Archive: Historicizing Corporate Evangelical Architecture	77 to 104
Conclusion_Ranting and Raving towards Faith in the Everyday	104 to 111
Bibliography_Saving the Best for Last	112 to 122

Preface_Taking A Stance within Architectural History

Making meaning and teasing relevance out of a micro-history always produces problems. Among academics, many of whom are atheists, such a task becomes harder when your history is a contemporary, religious one: evangelicals make most liberal-minded Americans quite anxious. Giving such a project a broader historiographical significance may seem laughable. One could cynically describe and analyze the park's values, its visitors, their revelations, the mass produced, banal nature of most postmodern religious architecture, and end one's study there. No need to upset secular universities by admitting Christian beliefs make at least partial sense. Connecting such a stance to what many consider more important socio-political topics, whose advocates usually point to religion as a cause of widespread panic, corruption, and violence, is even more unheard of in a secular age.¹ While many histories exist on Christian and other religious architectural topics, few attempt to sympathetically portray the motives and experiences of users.

This paper aims to deconstruct architectural history's traditional definitions of architecture, history, and archive through a case study of the Holy Land Experience, Orlando, Florida's only Christian theme park. The epitome of low architecture, the park derives its aesthetic from strip malls and other theme parks, both typologies largely elided from the canon of architectural history. The Holy Land exists on the periphery of academic discourse because it was executed by nameless designers and intended for middle rather than upper class patrons while it rests on the fringe of mainstream American culture because of the radical Christian beliefs associated with it. It is a *copyrighted space*, literally elided from visual culture by corporate oversight, their archives accessible only to specific employees. A key part of the historical research process is lost here, forcing practitioners to examine and reconstitute how they gather, select, and analyze data. In redefining architectural history to include a broader array of themes and built environments, historians should focus on spaces that experientially move users rather than meet

¹ Taylor, Charles, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2007). The magnum opus on this topic, Taylor's book is 874 pages long. Cf. Jakobsen, Janet R. and Ann Pellegrini, *Secularisms* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).

predetermined standards like having extensive corresponding archives. These new goals should push researchers to each create their own archival processes that explore how architecture and its users actively create history together. My work here thus began in and belongs within the **discipline** of architectural history: it is this discourse's rules I am trying to break through exploring what happens when there is no formal archive. This issue undergirds, even catalyzed, this entire project.

The Holy Land Experience represents what architectural history conceives of as a immersive space and a corporate built environment. These literatures continue to draw critical theory to overemphasize the economic and social values underpinning various sites. I was drawn to the Holy Land, because, in seeking to study the experiential value of space, I realized that I felt the most in branded environments. I entered the park with faith in this architecture and left with faith in its ability to move others. While my work explores the corrupt nature of televangelical companies and their architectures, I believe historians should acknowledge, critically assess, and then move beyond these concerns to highlight the genuine experiences housed within such spaces.

Scholarship on immersive, or totalized, environments, addresses how and why American and international audiences have lost themselves in a virtual world. Within these environments, we move away from reality and towards its replication or, more dangerous yet, into fantasy. Former Disney teen star Vanessa Hudgens best articulates this problem in the film *Spring Breakers*. On the first of many thieving and killing sprees enacted to gain an American Dream, the collegiate spring break, she inspires her cohorts by yelling: "Just pretend it's a fucking video game."² It is 2013 and we have so lost touch with the difference between the real and its representations that we can no longer differentiate between the two.

² *Spring Breakers*, directed by Harmony Korine (2012; New York, NY: A24, 2013). Cf. Saler, Michael, "Waste Lands and Silly Valleys: Wittgenstein, Mass Culture, and Re-Enchantment," in *The Re-Enchantment of the World: Secular Magic in a Rational Age*, eds. Joshua Landy and Michael Saler (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 56-71. Finding references throughout Wittgenstein's career, this article argues that the "silliness" (Wittgenstein's term) of American popular culture produces more new meanings through its juxtapositions and multiple points of view than philosophy, high art, and other conventionally championed forms of knowledge. My work tries to plumb the depths of such silliness for meaning.

We could relate this concept to hyperreality (Eco), mimesis (Auerbach, Taussig), simulacrum (Baudrillard), or even the panopticon (Foucault's greatest act of theft).³ Other than Taussig, these citations read as stale, packs of crackers far past their expiration dates. Why problematize them over and over when a film about the recent past sums up ten thousand pages in one sentence? I do not think we should stop reading (or writing) such texts, but we should also begin to think associatively about secondary sources, to find meaning in--rather than being amused by or attacking--the lower cultural forms that construct our everyday environments and influence you, me, our subjects, and our projects. I do not think that many of these authors, their esteemed colleagues, or even architectural historians consider these tasks worthwhile.

Lots of people have also written about corporate built environments. Most notable is Beatriz Preciado's "Pornotopia."⁴ Here the issue of corporate archival research emerges. While I do not want to spend my time scolding companies as Preciado does Playboy, she highlights how corporate power structures frequently refuse to let scholars access materials that would enable more extensive histories to be written. The corporation cock blocks the historian. The Holy Land Experience's lawyer was the closest I came to discussing let alone accessing its overseers' archive. Even the park assumes that I will lambast

³ Cf. Eco, Umberto, *Travels in Hyperreality*, trans. by William Weaver (San Diego, CA: Harcourt Bruce Jovanovich, 1986); Auerbach, Eric, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. William R. Trask (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003); Baudrillard, Jean, *America*, trans. Chris Turner (New York: Verso, 1989); Baudrillard, Jean, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994); and Foucault, Michel, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995). *Discipline and Punish* could be seen as connecting immersive and corporate environment literature: in representing power dynamics inherent to social structures, the panopticon not only subsumes users of such environments under an unseen disciplinary paradigm by employing a concrete spatial distribution, but it has also been increasingly incorporated into corporate spaces as a means of surveillance and control. It is tired and reductive, perhaps not in its initial explication but as a result of being beyond overused. See the introduction and notes 22, 89, 111, and 128 for a discussion of Taussig's work.

⁴ Preciado, Beatriz, "Pornotopia," in *Cold War Hotheouses: Inventing Postwar Culture from Cockpit to Playboy*, eds. Annmarie Brennan, Beatriz Colomina, and Jeannie Kim (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004), 216-253. Preciado's article contains one illuminating image: a copy of a letter she received from the magazine informing her she was not allowed access to the corporate archives or to reproduce images of its architecture. This is potentially because of her criticism of *Playboy*. Cf. Fraterrigo, Elizabeth, "The Answer to Suburbia: Playboy's Urban Lifestyle," *Journal of Urban History* 34, no. 5 (July 2008), 747-774. Fraterrigo does not criticize Playboy and was thus allowed to publish extensive images of the spaces.

its goals and its owners. This expectation breaks my heart because it is far from my aim. I was forced to create my own archive out of pictures and videos taken by my iPhone and Nikon camera.⁵ While recording heavily copyrighted spaces to create this archive, and thus partially subverting corporate power, remains an integral part of my work, I do so out of the hope that historians and future generations can see value in these built environments and the individuals populating them.

Other scholarship on corporate space, like Reinhold Martin's *The Organizational Complex*, rigorously examines how postwar environments reflected the popular visual logic of this period--that of the cinema--and, in relation to these issues, implies that High Architectural Examples like the Seagram Building birthed low corporate spaces like office parks. It is truly impressive work if one has read Deleuze's oeuvre.⁶ Gabrielle Esperdy has written histories on the American roadscape and the architectures on and around them. Her blog takes a too casual tone and an unsystematic approach regarding these topics but her minor effort suggests that contemporary architectural historian may mediate the world through car windows, camera lenses, and ephemera. Here, the historian becomes a tourist and each successive space an analytical destination to be embraced. Another online journal, *Sensate*, provides a more productive template for informally academicizing the internet.⁷

The car as a means of transit and as an architecture undoubtedly influences my historiographical stance as I most often read sites first through windows of a rental car, a touristic object par excellence.

⁵ This process makes virtual the built environment. Admittedly, it also renders my critique of the literature concerning immersive built environments tricky as the iPhone as creator and container of an archive (or perhaps just as a librarian that facilitates the collection and transmission of archival materials) remains an unwritten methodological stance and may take some time to gain widespread acceptance.

⁶ Martin, Reinhold, *The Organizational Complex: Architecture, Media, and Corporate Space* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003). Despite its many flaws (especially the pretentious assumptions it makes about its readers), Martin's text remains the key entryway into understanding the context from which American corporate built environments emerged. Its theoretical impulse leads to as many revelations as frustrating dead ends. Cf. Mozingo, Louise A., *Pastoral Capitalism: A History of Suburban Corporate Landscapes* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011). Mozingo's book offers a breadth of examples with which one can flesh out Martin's claims. It lacks the similar theoretical apparatus that make *The Organizational Complex* productive for considering a broader building culture rather than simply a typology and its relation to economic and social history.

⁷ Cf. Esperdy, Gabrielle, *American Road Trip: Gabrielle Esperdy Explores Built and Natural Environments in the U.S.*, accessed April 12, 2013, <http://www.esperdy.net/>.

These vehicles are also corporate spaces, something many people fail to point out, and thus we engage with the corporate almost as a second skin while moving from place to place. (We rarely, if ever, exit corporate space!) Motion, whether in a car or on foot, propels me through each space I encounter and catalyzes the process of accretion through which my mind gathers and relates images and memories of built environments to other considerations like politics, films, magazines, food, and plastics. Cars, tires, shoes, windows, and feet, objects facilitating motion, exist alongside and expose me to these other factors while also becoming part of a visual culture that cultivates my opinions about a given site. Narrating the movement towards and within the Holy Land thus enables me to create a history, a study that is nothing if not the interpretive repetition of past actions and the objects that furnish them. My history relies upon the brands that facilitate my movement through space. The following paper only hints at the significance of the car and motion, both means of constructing an alternative archive.

Literatures concerning corporate and immersive environments seem insufficient when compared to the act of driving, a nearly universal language in today's America.⁸ It is dangerous to become too embedded within discourse when your primary subjects--a theme park and its patrons--wouldn't know the above authors' names let alone understand their claims. This is not to say that I am avoiding the creation of a historiographical position, refusing to respond to these discussions, but rather that I am resisting the desire to litter every chapter with lots of allusive names, stances, and words that make me feel like I am stroking my keyboard to an intellectual climax. Again, the archive, how we can make and re-shape it ourselves, should re-emerge as a primary concern if we are to move from pessimism cultivated by anxiously responding to and building upon previous histories and theories and towards grace, finding meaning in the everyday.

⁸ Cf. Borden, Iain, *Drive: Automobile Journeys through Film, Cities, and Landscapes*, London: Reaktion, 2012) and *Skateboarding, Space, and the City: Architecture and the Body* (New York: Berg, 2001). Borden focuses on how various means of transit and their movement through built environments reconstitute the meaning of spaces and places in unexpected ways.

Last month, I gave a little talk at the Society for Architectural Historians. Four people approached me after. Each had enjoyed my presentation but longed for outside connections to be made. It seemed, against my best intentions, I was acting like a modernist architect, largely considering my site as detached from its broader socio-cultural context. So here are the sites I would consider related to the Holy Land Experience: Heritage USA, a Christian theme park now closed in South Carolina whose abandoned expanse may be digitally strolled through on You-

Tube⁹; Silver Dollar City, located in Branson, Missouri, a replica of a frontier town with morning prayer services and pervaded by the general spirit of nineteenth-century evangelizing; the Walt Disney theme parks, which nostalgically re-imagine late nineteenth-and-early-twentieth-century American architecture and urbanism; Forest Lawn Cemetery's *Crucifixion*, the largest painting in the world on which a light show occurs¹⁰; the set of *The Passion of the Christ* and the movie theaters in which audiences watched this film; every megachurch ever built from the third-century Cathedral of Constantinople forward; hell houses, Christian haunted houses that depict how sins are (violently) punished; and so on. I am cataloging these built environment because, if I too explicitly associate the site to a previous literature on these related places, I will lose myself, my archive, my stances, my topic, and my subjects but in the logic of formal connections that too often characterize architectural history and most other 'disciplines.'

The final question becomes one of the company I kept while doing this research and, in conjunction with this anthropological inquiry, why and how "I" inserts itself into a history. It would be easy to claim that I was alone--which I may say, literally, throughout the ensuing pages--but I must differentiate going to the park unaccompanied and walking through its attractions by myself from 'being alone.'

⁹ I think such videos are the best 'histories' of Christian themed spaces I have found during my research process. They speak to where our culture is headed and present some of the most uncanny images I have ever seen. How and why is a space over twenty years abandoned still meticulously landscaped? Cf. "PTL/ Heritage USA: 22 Years Later-6/26/09- Vid #2," video clip, accessed April 12, 2013, YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhwILDdRR75E>. Given the ephemeral nature of YouTube and Vimeo clips, these sources should be archived.

¹⁰ Another YouTube video took me to this site. Less illustrious than the Heritage USA documents, but still a useful means of accessing a historical site and of seeing how tourists' imaginations function: "A Visit to Forest Lawn," video clip, accessed April 12, 2013, YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qA0fxMj-9cY>.

Historians, especially architectural ones, should never think of themselves in this state. We are surrounded by archives, some breathing, some paper, some technological, some immaterial, some concrete and stone; buildings buzz with archival presences. The first person should come into play whenever someone directly engages with a building and its embodiments. The ensuing descriptive passages would reach conclusions using the faculties that collect data, the individual historian's senses, rather than the relationship between texts. History won't become anthropology by using "I." It will expand its stylistic and persuasive domains. It should be noted that this 'aloneness' seemed to threaten most of the families within the Holy Land Experience, I inadvertently challenged their notion the nuclear family as the proper representation of American Christianity and rendered myself as an emblem of the country's eroding moral fabric.

The organizational framework of this essay is intended to illuminate the direction in which I believe architectural history should head, discursively outlined above and more explicitly laid out below. We will progress through historiographical problematics--the textual and physical ghosts that haunt our perception of the past and the archival gaps that create these issues--and towards an experiential, first-person account of how and why seemingly mundane built environments should be archived and historicized to prevent the creation of further losses. My point is this: drop your books, run to an archive or a building with your iPhone, and, maybe, on the way, listen to a pop song and try to connect all three. You will find an unexpected history in which you will undoubtedly see traces of the papercuts you got reading, may even feel these cuts touching a wall and see the relationship between the past and the present, between constructing an archive and taking a historiographical stance.

Introduction_Summarizing the Field

The Holy Land Experience (figs. 2 and 3), a Christian theme park that opened on February 5,

2001, sits immediately off of exit 79 on I-4 in Orlando, Florida. Within half a mile of an upscale mall and three miles to Universal Studios Orlando, the park immerses tourists, pilgrims, in a partial replica of first-century CE Jerusalem, brimming with live shows that reenact biblical narratives through song and dance numbers. Marvin Rosenthal, the Holy Land's founder and the head of Zion's Hope, a central Florida ministry, constructed the park to actualize his evangelical beliefs. Rosenthal converted from Judaism and, along with millions of other Americans, believes that Christians will retake Jerusalem before Christ's Second Coming. In its first iteration, the Holy Land sought to convert, and save, Jews while using the park to prepare Christian Zionists for their acquisition of Israel. This distinctly American evangelical belief system articulates itself structurally through one of the nation's most influential, ideologically flexible, and misunderstood typologies, the theme park.





Figures 2 and 3: a map of the greater Orlando area illustrating the position of the Holy Land Experience, top, and a map of the park itself, bottom, with the Scriptorium attraction--the subject of my second chapter--in the far upper left numbered '35' (Trinity Broadcasting Network, 2011)

The Holy Land Experience has gone through growing pains since opening under Rosenthal in 2001. Despite an initial flurry of visitors, the park quickly began to lose money and, on July 20, 2005, Rosenthal lost his title of CEO. Two years later, in June 2007, the more moderate Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) purchased the Holy Land Experience, which was then over eight million dollars in debt, for thirty seven million dollars and sought to revamp the park financially and philosophically. Non-denominational Christian beliefs rather than apocalyptic creed now more directly inform the park's daily spectacles: TBN emphasizes entertainment and contemporary concerns in their performances rather than highlighting their historical, textual basis.¹¹

¹¹ Pinsky, Mark, *A Jew Among Evangelicals: A Guide for the Perplexed* (Louisville: Westminster, John Knox, 2006), 111-149. In addition to this chapter, see Pinsky's extensive reporting for the *Orlando Sentinel*, partially included in the bibliography. Over the course of this project, I have interviewed him about his involvement with the park, Rosenthal, and TBN.

The finances of Paul and Janice Crouch, the figureheads of TBN, have recently been called into question and, in the face of money laundering and tax evasion accusations, the park's future seems as uncertain as ever. Such corrupt personal histories are common among evangelical celebrities and sprinkle places like the Holy Land Experience with irony. Jim Bakker, another televangelist, ran Heritage USA, a now defunct Christian theme park in Fort Mill, South Carolina. This theme park shut its doors following marital and tax scandals in the 1980s, yet Bakker has emerged from jail and risen once more to prominence in association with TBN, hosting nightly theatrical shows in the Christian tourist hub Branson, Missouri.¹² Despite their function as important loci of symbolic action for their target audience, each of these spaces is privately owned, usually by a family or an individual, and very susceptible to changing along with personal circumstance.

Above fifty million American evangelicals fuel the Christian entertainment and tourism industry, but this core demographic has begun to age without taking on younger members.¹³ Denominational power shifts as frequently as the socio-economic and political landscape, and so do the ways the popular imagination conceives of sites like Jerusalem and even figures like Jesus Christ. The Holy Land Experience suffers from the cultural logic of late capitalism. Its mass-produced materials and imitative architecture typifies a moment that has just past, leaving a hollow worship space emblematic of late-nineteen-nineties-and-early-aughts financial optimism in which the Christian right thrived.¹⁴ Yet such a compelling reading reduces the multiplicity of representational, phenomenological, and socio-cultural

¹² Ketchell, Aaron K., *Holy Hills of the Ozarks: Religion and Tourism in Branson, Missouri* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2007), xi-xiii. Among other notable sites, Branson also contains the Precious Moments Chapel in which the Sistine Chapel is recreated using the well-known, titular Christian figurine characters. One should also note that Heritage USA was the third most popular theme park in the United States until its closing; the Holy Land Experience has yet to be included in any top 25 attendance lists.

¹³ "Percentage of Protestant Americans Is in Steep Decline, Study Finds," *New York Times* October 10, 2012, accessed December 14, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/10/us/study-finds-that-percentage-of-protestant-americans-is-declining.html?_r=0.

¹⁴ Jameson, esp. 38-45 and 97-129. Certainly the façade-driven replications of the Holy Land Experience parallel Jameson's discussion of postmodern architecture as a photographic copy or specter of its former structural totality. This reading is expansive rather than reductive, paving the way to a recuperative postmodern history.

problems presented by the theme park.

The Holy Land Experience exemplifies a vernacular postmodern architecture, employing historic styles using modern materials for contemporary purposes. This built environment engages discourses concerning the interactivity of sacred spaces, radical conservative American politics and religion, the anthropology of Christianity, the corporate overhaul of traditionally public activities and spaces, and the decay of the American Sunbelt. Taking these seemingly disaggregated topics as my starting points, I aim to write a cautiously optimistic history that describes and theorizes how the typological convergence of the theme park and place of worship creates unique behavioral relationships between the park's replicated spaces and the pilgrim-tourist. Richard Longstreth's numerous studies on American commercial vernacular architecture, including *City Center to Regional Mall*, demonstrate how mundane architectural forms, low-rise commercial structures, became the fabric weaving urban and suburban communities together in the postwar period.¹⁵ This trend of banalizing spatial experience paved the way for the theme park. The Holy Land Experience synthesizes the historicism of Disney with a less monumental, more prosaic aesthetic. Such "junkspace" (2002) typifies the architecture proliferating globally in airports, shopping malls, and other generic, mass producible typologies.¹⁶ Rem Koolhaas mistakenly maligns these postmodern spaces without considering the everyday, even revelatory, experiences consumers and workers (also users) often experience within them.

My stylistic and philosophical use of the term postmodernism diverges from its standard architectural and theoretical definitions. We think of American postmodern architecture as beginning with Robert Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966) and ending with the Museum of

¹⁵ Cf. Longstreth, Richard, *City Center to Regional Mall: Architecture, the Automobile, and Retailing in Los Angeles, 1920-1950* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997). This and numerous other volumes by Longstreth tie the emergence of modernist consumptive typologies to urban morphology. The effects malls had upon the urban landscape constructed an American urban image that included theme parks.

¹⁶ Koolhaas, Rem, "Junkspace," *October* 100 (Spring 2002), 175-190. Koolhaas can confuse with his cryptic tone, but this essay delineates so many characteristics of postmodern space that it cannot be ignored.

Modern Art's Deconstructivist Architecture exhibition (1988); a similar timeline may be traced in the European design field. Charles Jencks' textbook with bite, *The New Paradigm in Architecture*, indicates a rupture in this conventional history. Jencks diagrams a stylistic evolution that begins immediately after World War II and continues through the current generation of architects including those prioritized in the 1988 MoMA show.¹⁷ While style--beyond the socio-political implications of its mimetic re-application in Orlando--does not serve as a central concern of this paper, Jencks' genealogy implies broad, ill-defined terms like post-modernism cannot be as easily bounded off and forgotten as MoMA's curators may sometimes fancy them. The extensive organizational and structural logic that undergird both the MoMA show and Jencks' diagram suggest the specification inherent to late capitalism--the endless division of tasks to create particular jobs and, more importantly here, the individualization of commodities to make them appear different and equally worthy of consumption. Architects and curators employ these methods because they have realized they must repackaging the same building materials in different styles to continuously create demand.

Recent architectural histories by Reinhold Martin and Jorge Otero-Pailos demonstrate the effort to recuperate and to understand this recent past in order to define our present. Both authors imply that the socio-political conditions of postmodernism continue to influence contemporary building culture. I choose to take their stances further and argue that postmodern design continues today in both large architectural firms as well as in many local contexts such as Orlando, a city almost entirely produced between the 1960s and the 1990s in conjunction with Walt Disney World. Orlando's status as a small farming settlement and train stop through the 1930s, when it became a small military town, made it a sunny swath of the the Florida landscape ripe for postwar development. By 1964, when the Disney Corporation began acquiring land just south of Orlando, the one-and-two story commercial architecture of postmodern sprawl

¹⁷ Jencks, Charles, *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 50-51. The persistence of a near scientific evolutionary understanding of style seems increasingly irrelevant when architects and historians need to regain a sensory understanding of space.

that dominated the American built environment had made its way to Orlando. Throughout its early history and after the arrival of corporate themed spaces like Walt Disney World, Orlando manipulated its public image to possess a history it lacked--much like the allusiveness of postmodern classicism. This urban morphology begs for Orlando to be considered as part of postmodern architectural history. Neither Martin nor Otero-Pailos discuss the city or the Holy Land Experience, but both provide frameworks for considering its importance. Whereas Martin uses architecture to exemplify different theoretical tropes of the postmodern movement, Otero-Pailos foregrounds the careers of four architect-historians that participated in the movement by writing sensually engaging, polemical texts.

Martin offers a dearth of bibliographic references and obfuscates the destructive effects of American politics after 1971, over-citing theorists, but his de-emphasis of the architect in favor of concepts like image, language, landscape, history, and, most importantly, users moves postmodern historiography away from Jencks' stylistic starchitecture.¹⁸ Martin argues that extant postmodern structures possess historical ghosts, or reminders of past blunders and uncorrectable failures. The Holy Land Experience is not intended for an exclusively Catholic audience, preventing an easy correlation between the Holy Ghost and Martin's metaphor; Christ's daily resurrection during the passion play does, however, foreground ghosts as revelators. While Martin's methods encourage one to comb through the Holy Land for traces of today's faltering economic paradigm and its fraught relationship with Christian conservatives over the past four decades, the kind of capital required to build the Holy Land no longer floats as freely as it once did, revealing that value systems experience institutional building booms when their political representatives hold more sway.¹⁹ Otero-Pailos does not reorient disciplinary biases or encourage cultural and political

¹⁸ Martin, Reinhold, *Utopia's Ghost: Architecture and Postmodernism, Again* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), esp. xi-xxvi and 147-179. Martin does not explicitly state that he intends to re-open the postmodern canon, but his book does exactly that.

¹⁹ Harding, Susan Friend, *The Book of Jerry Falwell: Fundamentalist Language and Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). Harding's linguistic anthropology mistakenly elides the spatial turn, but she provides a productive account of the rise and fall of Falwell's Moral Majority. Her emphasis on language does, however, demonstrate the persuasive means through which these evangelical Protestant sects rose to and maintained power

paranoia regarding the built environment so much as he foregrounds the understudied representational tools employed by postmodern architectural educators. Christian Norberg-Schulz, Charles Moore, and Kenneth Frampton, among others, stressed phenomenology in order to deviate from a canonical linear understanding of architecture.²⁰ Although architect-theorist Juhani Pallasmaa's *The Eyes of the Skin* over a decade ago asked designers to integrate sensory experience into their practice and their theoretical understanding of the built environment, Otero-Pailos makes a more historical argument that demonstrates the past effectiveness of architectural phenomenology.²¹ His four subjects extensively photographed buildings as records of their encounters, an inspiration for creating my own archive.

The connection between text and experience characterizes not only architect-historians of the 1970s but also the Holy Land and the Moral Majority's worship style. The Scriptorium, an attraction described in chapter two, embodies this relationship. The theme park aims to bring a textually accurate but contemporary Bible to life much like the Moral Majority created a Christian entertainment and leisure economy to actualize their own public sphere. Postmodern theorists extensively cited by Martin and Otero-Pailos, including the aforementioned architectural phenomenologists, further inform my sensorial concerns. Italian literary scholar and novelist Umberto Eco, for example, theorizes the peculiarly American recreation of historical works of art and architecture in *Travels in Hyperreality*, suggesting that a playful, ethnographic approach may be as convincing as the more rigorously theoretical method found in Michael Taussig's *Mimesis and Alterity*. Taussig persuasively argues that the use of the mimetic, or replicatory, faculty demonstrates an attempt to recreate and reinterpret images or behaviors across cultural and

for multiple generations.

²⁰ Otero-Pailos, Jorge, *Architecture's Historical Turn: Phenomenology and the Rise of the Postmodern* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010). Cf. Pallasmaa, Juhani, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2005).

²¹ For compelling (if sometimes overwrought) interpretations of several postmodern typologies, see Ira G. Zepp, *The New Religious Image of America: The Shopping Mall as Ceremonial Center* (Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1997), and Chuihua Judy Chung and Sze Tsung Leong, eds., *Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping* (New York: Taschen, 2001). There is something obviously mall-like about the park. It is nothing if not corporate space used to promote its respective owners.

historical spans. In deemphasizing vision as the sole means of perceiving and internalizing space, he demonstrates numerous other sensorial means of gathering data.²²

The inclusion of these authors suggests the malleability of postmodernism as a concept—ever shifting across and within academic disciplines—in addition to the dangers of studying architecture as a bounded-off, or autonomous, entity. This concept rose to prominence among early twentieth-century modernist architects: it conceived of space as bounded off, considering sites and building's formal characters divorced from their context. Buildings were aesthetic objects.²³ The recent revival of architectural autonomy, initiated by the Italian architect Aldo Rossi and adopted by many American postmodern architects who designed for Disney, prevents sites like the Holy Land Experience, executed by men and women far outside of a formalist canon of pedigreed professionals like Frank Gehry or Michael Graves, from being considered significant cultural emblems.

Theme parks, which according to conventional histories like those written by Scott A. Lukas, have their modern origins in Coney Island, Brooklyn, but came of age with Disneyland and Disney World in 1950s and 1970s.²⁴ As suggested by Steve Mannheim's archival study *Walt Disney and the Quest for Community*, Walt Disney considered architectural and urban planning to be his most significant contribution to American culture.²⁵ Disney influenced the malling and theming of American architecture beginning with Main Street USA. This façade-driven commercial district serves as the entryway to the Magic Kingdom, Disneyland, and most other Disney parks and idealizes the early twentieth-century

²² Taussig, Michael T., *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses* (New York: Routledge, 1993), xiii-xix and 70-87.

²³ Osman, Michael, et al., *Perspecta* 33 (June 2002: Mining Autonomy). This issue of the Yale Architectural Journal contains many articles that concern this problem.

²⁴ Lukas, Scott A., *Theme Park* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007), 21-64. Lukas' work reads more like a textbook than rigorous scholarship. Cf. Koolhaas, Rem, *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1994), 30-79. Koolhaas' connection of entertainment and themed spaces to the growth of the America's economic capital provides a suggestive foundation for this study. Also see Esperdy, Gabrielle, "Defying the Grid: A Retroactive Manifesto for the Culture of Decongestion," *Perspecta* 30 (1999), 10-33. Esperdy responds to Koolhaas by exploring how suburban decentralization had its root in New York City housing policy that undid, among other things, the congestion of tenements.

²⁵ Mannheim, Steve, *Walt Disney and the Quest for Community* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 3-29.

Midwestern town where Disney grew up. Theme park literature primarily concerns Disney's numerous corporate playgrounds and the "Disneyfication" of American and global architectural culture.²⁶ The influence of commodity culture and entertainment upon architectural space is a leitmotiv of postmodernism and largely derives from Disney, yet many readings along these lines—like *Jesus in Disneyland*—veer towards the generic and sociological rather than assessing historical events, sites, and user experiences in detail.²⁷

Few scholars have assessed Disney architecture's unexpected influence on the commercial vernacular because such built environments use similar materials and forms as more expensive and elaborate commercial architecture but seek a clientele other than the visitors anticipated by Walt Disney World.²⁸ The corporation has long promoted a middle class, white nuclear family as its target audience despite their recent attempts to broaden their appeal with 'gay days' and other events.²⁹ Much of the demographic Disney attracts are Christian and, by extension, its neo-traditional themed architecture led them to desire a similar aesthetic upon returning home. The proliferation of such architectural style throughout American suburbs implies the widespread influence of theme parks. Its religio-economic underpinnings remain untroubled.

²⁶ The extensive literature on Disney includes Beth Dunlop's *Building a Dream: The Art of Disney Architecture* (New York: Abrams, 1996) and two edited volumes, *Designing Disney's Theme Parks: The Architecture of Reassurance* (Paris: Flammarion, 1997) and *Rethinking Disney: Private Control, Public Dimensions* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2005). Whereas Dunlop, an architectural critic, relies upon interviews with Disney executives and her own perception of Disney's major parks and resorts, the first volume focuses on how Disney architecture provided a safe haven in a contested American landscape and the third situates the company's recent history in relation to New York and Paris' growth patterns as well as providing identity and economic-based critiques. All three books discuss storyboarding, a Disney invention used to lay out each scene in a film, as a metaphor for understanding performative corporate architecture.

²⁷ Feldman, Jackie and Amos Ron. "American Holy Land: Orientalism, Disneyization, and the Evangelical Gaze," in *Orient - Orientalistik - Orientalismus : Geschichte und Aktualität einer Debatte*, edited by Brukhard Schnepel, et al., (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2011), 151-176.

²⁸ In recent years, Disney has even tried to subvert the lower commercial vernacular by building low rise motels on their property. The All Stars Resort offers such rooms at a slightly higher price, and with greater aesthetic rigor, than far seedier options outside of the Disney compound.

²⁹ Hanzel, Dann and Josh Fippen, *A Walt Disney Resort Outing: The Only Vacation Planning Guide Exclusively for Gay and Lesbian Travelers* (New York: Hyperion, 1998). Every year Walt Disney World holds a publicly announced 'gay day' for the LGBT community.

Michael Sorkin's edited essay collection *Variations on a Theme Park* presses against Disney scholarship to decry the repressive socio-political context that produces such spaces. Postmodern urban renewal projects, including malls, downtowns, and other themed spaces, constituted the majority of construction projects in the early 1990s when the volume was published.³⁰ The post-recession American architectural landscape has shifted. Many of the spaces Sorkin and his colleagues described as brimming with consumers now crumble. The volume delineates productive connections between postmodern, themed spaces, and their broader contexts, which work on the Holy Land Experience and Disney fails to do.³¹ The economic, political, and social climates of the surrounding environment explicitly affect the dynamics between theme park workers, clients, and the park's infrastructure in a more complex manner than indicated by Sorkin's volume. Rem Koolhaas' *Delirious New York* and John Findlay's *Magic Lands* provide more templates for understanding a given theme park's influence upon the urban growth patterns missing in *Variations*.³²

The American Sunbelt, a term that describes the Rustbelt's antithesis, houses most of the country's theme parks. This region served as popular relocation site for American industry in the postwar period through the 1990s, but the recent recession hit the housing market in these southern states hard and outsourcing is further thinning these cities' populations.³³ Few scholars have explored Orlando as a

³⁰ Lyon, David, *Jesus in Disneyland: Religion in Postmodern Times* (Malden, MA: Polity Press in association with Blackwell Publishers, 2000).

³¹ Sorkin, Michael, ed., *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992). This volume is now over twenty years old and, while many of its essays remain productive, a similar volume regarding the aging of such spaces needs to be written.

³² Findlay, John, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture after 1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 53-159. Findlay's discussion of Disneyland as an urban model and its relationship to Silicon Valley suggests that postwar American architecture shared not only a similar aesthetic but also a shared economic agenda.

³³ The curatorial and scholarly attempt to handle this crisis has largely failed to politicize the excess that led to these recent events. Cf. Bergdoll, Barry and Reinhold Martin, eds. *Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2012). The projects commissioned for this spring 2012 show were based upon a (literal) Socratic dialogue rather than the conditions that led to foreclosure. Notable exceptions may be found in literary non-fiction and fiction concerning Florida. Cf. Reyes Paul, *Exiles in Eden: Life among the Ruins of Florida's Great Recession* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2010) and Karen Russell, *Swamplandia!* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011). The former discusses foreclosure in Tampa Bay from the perspective of someone who cleaned out foreclosed homes, while the latter follows a family that owns a floundering alligator theme park on Florida's southwestern coast.

byproduct of evanescent entertainment-scapes and fewer still have speculated on how waning growth will alter tourist-dependent urban landscapes.³⁴ Two recent publications, the edited volume *Sunbelt Rising* and *Sunburnt Cities*, respectively address the political, social, and religious demographics of this admittedly vague region. Preservation, zoning, and planning discourses undoubtedly influenced the construction of the Holy Land Experience during the tail end of an economic boom period and create productive connections between Orlando's growth, stability, projected future, and the park itself.³⁵ As a Floridian writing about this under-researched postmodern urban landscape, I will situate my attempts to expand the understanding of the Holy Land Experience, and theme parks more generally, not only as ephemeral, experiential spaces but also as historical monuments that allow me to testify to as well as to interrogate a regional American ethos weathering the boom-and-bust cycles of an unprecedented, tourist-driven metropolitan growth cycle.

The neoliberal paradigm, as discussed by David Harvey and others, characterizes the social, economic, and political landscape of the last forty-plus years.³⁶ Western governments encouraged economic privatization that has arguably led to the various fiscal crises America and the global economy

³⁴ Most literature on the Sunbelt concerns Los Angeles and Miami. Cf. Banham, Reyner, *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009) and *The Architecture of the Well-Tempered Environment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). Banham's emphases on different ecological divisions within a sprawling metropolis as well as temperature control and its diverse effects speak to the Orlando area, which demands nearly year-round air conditioning and sprawls, like the rest of the state, in unending suburbs and strip malls that form socio-economic ecologies of their own. Cf. Brotemarkle, Benjamin D., *Beyond the Theme Parks: Exploring Central Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999). Almost no literature on the Orlando area mentions the numerous bases that were built here during and after World War II. The entire Florida military-industrial complex receives far less due than its Angelino counterpart. One should also note that the popular architectural press continues to focus only on Miami, where starchitects and growth continues despite a short period of financial uncertainty. A Frank Gehry concert hall, a parking garage with high end retail sprinkled throughout, and an indoor baseball stadium with art galleries and fine dining have all opened since 2008.

³⁵ Hollander, Justin B., *Sunburnt Cities: The Great Recession, Depopulation, and Urban Planning in the American Sunbelt* (New York: Routledge, 2011). This text details numerous ways for the Sunbelt to handle smart shrinkage, something that it claims many Rustbelt cities have not managed to do. The final chapter concerns Orlando and provides the most extensive description of the city I found beyond studies of its theme parks and Brotemarkle.

³⁶ Harvey, David, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005). Harvey provides an overview of the economic and political history of neoliberalism from the early 1970s forward. He explicitly connects the religious right to neoliberalism, claiming that conservative social outlets enable the perpetuation of an individualist, privatized nation. Cf. Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000). *Empire's* main argument concerns the 'multitude,' a new proletariat whose primarily virtual connectivity has the potential to undermine the neoliberal paradigm.

now face. The unfettered growth of conservative businesses, including real estate tycoons in Florida and their political allies like the Moral Majority, have recently lost their grip over the American economy. In many ways, the theme park represents an American neoliberal commodity: they function as corporately produced pleasure zones for a conservative middle-class demographic seeking diversions and subsume activities as well as environments traditionally public within the private realm. This era began when President Richard Nixon instituted policies that virtualized money, taking America off of the gold standard. In fact, Walt Disney World opened in 1971, merely two months after the Nixon Shock. One could say the material dissimulation of money fostered a heightened interest in the accentuated hyperrealities present in theme parks. More broadly, organizational “junk” architecture typifies the neoliberal paradigm. All of these built environments are designed for maximal use and disposability, to be bendable to the market’s needs.

Tourism studies offer a complement to broader economic and stylistic concerns by emphasizing the patron’s individual experience and its relationship to space, objects, and other users.³⁷ Visitors to the Holy Land often fall into the more particular category of pilgrim, but, given their presence in Orlando, the single largest international tourist market, they also function as actors in broader economic and social phenomena. The average visitor to the Holy Land Experience shares a set of values with fellow visitors, creating a homogenous but not necessarily interactive group. Dean MacCannell and John Urry provide theoretical frameworks that could be applied to the faithful visiting the park in relation to their secular counterparts. Aaron K. Ketchell’s *Holy Hills of the Ozarks, Religion and Tourism* serves as the best such template for this project because it synthesizes ethnographic and historical research to explore Branson, Missouri. Here, themed such spaces are intended to promote a particular set of values. Their popularity, despite lacking replications of biblical sites, moves one to look beyond the Holy Land’s mimetic

³⁷ Cf. Lasansky, D. Medina and Brian L. McLaren, eds., *Architecture and Tourism: Perception, Performance, and Place* (Oxford: Berg, 2004). A very productive anthology for considering the tourist, tourism, and architecture in conjunction with one another; many of the dynamics discussed here have likely changed since the recent global economic meltdown, providing further reason to re-examine the topic.

forms. Both the explicit and implicit use of American Christian morals to construct environments and to influence the performances they contain—quite similar to the daily crucifixions in Orlando—suggest the need to look inside, or beyond, the imitative architectural facades of the Holy Land and to consider the ontological perspectives they cultivate.³⁸

What literature does exist on historical and contemporary religious space often argues for such a methodological shift, yet few scholars have put these beliefs into practice. Most notably, Lindsay Jones' *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture* establishes an extensive list of interpretive frameworks, many of which encourage ethnographic research.³⁹ Her central thesis—that religious and sacred architecture should be discussed not as products resulting from construction periods and left to age but rather as spaces activated and experienced in new ways by individual pilgrims or visitors in many time periods—informs my desire to explore the Holy Land Experience as a place of constant change. Personal revelation should

³⁸ Branham, Joan R, "The Temple that Won't Quit: Constructing Sacred Space in Orlando's Holy Land Experience Theme Park," *Harvard Divinity Bulletin* 36.3 (2008), 18-31. As a scholar of ancient Jerusalem's archaeology, Branham gets a little caught up in the relative authenticity of the Holy Land Experience's recreations. It seems to be that experiential revelation was a far greater concern to Marvin Rosenthal and continues to inform TBN's administrative efforts. The attempt to appeal to pilgrims using contemporary song-and-dance numbers that one could find on prime time television corroborates the degree to which the park's owners seek to blend history with the expectations of postmodern consumers. This article nonetheless serves as a fruitful addendum to my proposed discussion of mimesis. Cf. Wharton, Annabel Jane, *Selling Jerusalem: Relics, Replicas, and Theme Parks* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 189-238. The final chapter includes a peripheral discussion of the Holy Land Experience. The economic historical bent here is compelling but superficial. Wharton could be well served by exposure to Taussig's claims concerning the sensorial aspects of mimesis, whose relation to architecture remains unexplored, in addition to his politicized understanding of this process.

³⁹ Jones, Lindsay, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture: Experience, Interpretation, Comparison*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000). While the first volume outlines the rationale behind Jones' methodology, the second volume provides eleven new interpretive frameworks for understanding sacred architecture. A scholar of religious studies, Jones easily identifies the lack of self-consciousness in architectural history, which she finds an ironic juxtaposition to its overabundance in her own field. Additionally, hermeneutics here does not imply a solely textual interpretive framework but rather a broader term encompassing any new means of exploring sacred space. Cf. Hall, David D., ed., *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997) and Meredith B. MacGuire, *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). An emergent field of "lived religion" scholarship in religious studies ties together the phenomenological and ethnographic strains I seek to combine, but these and other volumes reveal the literature's need for a concrete structural analogue (i.e., the built environment) around which to organize their arguments. Cf. Barrie, Thomas, *The Sacred In-Between: The Mediating Roles of Architecture* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 1-28. His introduction claims the book will employ hermeneutics and phenomenology as its methodologies. When these buzzwords are used, it seems that canonical philosophers on the topic will be frequently cited; more useful would be an application or integration of these philosophies with the built environment rather than a juxtaposition of architectural and philosophical concerns.

allow what may appear a mall-like postmodern theme park to transcend the petty politics and economics that motivate its owners and to be rendered a healing, life-affirming place for many pilgrims.

The anthropology of Christianity, an emergent field that Talal Asad spearheaded with “The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category,” points to the need for the a critique of the gaps left by architectural history.⁴⁰ Despite their sensorial emphases, the work of Asad and his followers undercuts the lived experiences of faithful tourists and workers at the Holy Land Experience. Omri Elisha’s *Moral Ambition*, which concerns two Knoxville megachurches’ community outreach programs, follows four subjects navigating the decline of corporate spirituality.⁴¹ Not only is the postmodern architecture of these two churches increasingly emblematic of the casual wealth its patrons no longer possess, but the moral code promoted within these conservative strongholds has begun to shift. The passive reception of scriptural exegesis is, very slowly, turning into the enactment of Christian charity. The performativity of American Christian culture was initiated in the late 1960s by Tammy Faye Bakker’s moralizing puppetry, made nationally prominent through Jerry Falwell’s evangelizing, and remained dominant through George W. Bush’s presidency both in his outspoken faith and that of his supporters. This paradigm rings increasingly false because it largely promoted the accumulation of significant capital for a few figureheads.

The shift Elisha describes reveals two significant theoretical influences upon the anthropology of Christianity and this study. Max Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* has long

⁴⁰ Asad, Talal, “The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category,” in *Genealogies of Religion* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 24-57. Asad still functions as the primary text anthropologists of Christianity respond to, yet many of his assertions may be debunked when considered in relation to the built environment. For example, he claims that religion is “a distinctive space of human practice and belief that cannot be reduced to any other” (27), a statement reeking of the formal and typological autonomy modernist architects promoted.

⁴¹ Elisha, Omri, *Moral Ambition: Mobilization and Social Outreach in Evangelical Megachurches* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), esp. 51-60. The highlighted pages contain a vivid description of Knoxville’s postmodern sprawl and how megachurches fit into this homogenous architectural fabric. Elisha’s book more broadly demonstrates how ethnographic inquiries may center around built environments as well as the actions that take place in, around, and as a result of one’s immersion within them.

encouraged its readers to consider modern Christianity as undergirded by the logic of the marketplace. Credit relations rather than moral imperatives pressure new members to join a given sect.⁴² Weber has catalyzed many cynical readings of religion, but his work also allows architectural historians to read the Magic Kingdom and other commercial spaces as possessing a *secular magic* whose genealogy rests in the religious.⁴³ Rituals within consumer spaces parallel those enacted in and around religious structures. The resulting analogies reveal secular space's spiritual substructure and lend these newer, non-religious architectures a sense of awe, wonder, and mystery. With the recent tremors in the late capitalist west, it seems that a less mediated and more dynamic sensorial world could reinvigorate immaterial and spiritual concerns that deemphasize material consumption, a process that could gradually reverse the Weberian (secular) twentieth century. This growing desire to experience one's beliefs derives from Jesuit philosopher Michel de Certeau, who reinterpreted consumer culture's evolution as a redemptive narrative. Rather than solely oppressed by an ideological system like capitalism, de Certeau renders consumers empowered because they deviate from conventional market patterns to define themselves.⁴⁴

As the product of a hyper-consumptive American Christianity, the Holy Land Experience is a historic built environment. It corresponds to a previous political, social, and economic paradigm still embraced by an agitated, aging population. Pilgrims still enjoy the park, yet the revelatory experiences it

⁴² Weber, Max, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism and Other Writings on the Rise of the West*, transl. Stephen Kalberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). In addition to Weber's canonical long essay, this volume also includes his equally rich (and shorter) essays "Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism" and "'Churches' and 'Sects' in North America: An Ecclesiastical, Sociopolitical Sketch." Weber here provides his perspective on early twentieth-century American culture, which was largely defined by one's religious affiliation; according to conventional narratives, the recent past into the present demonstrates a continuous movement away from this perspective and towards secularism.

⁴³ Kunstler, James Howard, *The Geography of Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America's Man-Made Landscape* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993), 217-244. Kunstler's book provides a provocative insight into the Disney parks' Main Street USAs. He claims that Walt Disney's idealized American past, articulated by these streets, was undergirded by the relation between Protestantism and capitalism that Weber noted upon visiting America.

⁴⁴ de Certeau, Michel, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, transl. Steven Rendell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984) and *The Writing of History* transl. Tom Conley (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988). de Certeau's sensitivity to the many ways in which consumers have appropriated objects and spaces for unexpected purposes has heavily influenced my desire to make a historical record of such events. His lifelong faith indicates how Christianity does not have to meet the corporate ends promoted by the Moral Majority. Moreover, the trope of history's ghosts run throughout these two texts and bolster Martin's claims.

offers are so explicitly fake--lip-synching occurs throughout the day and torn polyester seams abound on staff costumes--that sometimes the performances feel like the detritus of pop culture and strip malls. The political side effects of the Moral Majority and the Bush era's religiosity birthed this hybrid space. Traumas from this period weigh heavily upon America's younger generation among whom atheism and agnosticism has grown at a surprising rate.⁴⁵ Any ethnographic account of the site must attempt to understand not only user and worker experiences in the present day but also should aim to re-assemble, through material culture and interviews, the construction *and* earlier usage phases. Such research aims to render the park a byproduct of recent American social, political, and economic history and a constant generator of new histories.

My on-site research period, a week in mid-January 2013, afforded me one informant, Anthony, a 24-year-old Puerto Rican immigrant who visits the Holy Land Experience every time his Seventh Day Adventist family comes to Orlando. An architectural ethnographer should admittedly spend months to years in their chosen location. Archival research would also be a significant component of such an expanded project. Government records, architectural renderings, and other sources would provide a material cultural counterpart to lived ethnographic experience, fleshing out the context and goals of the original project as well as the ways in which new ownership and, more importantly, daily use has continuously altered the space. Time constraints and corporate oversight prohibited these ideals from becoming reality.

Tourists were not wildly receptive to my advances, while Anthony and the local tourist-industry workers I encountered were all initially contacted online. Grindr, an LGBT social networking application, provided a complex entryway into Orlando-area culture when my anticipations regarding average tourists' approachability proved false. Posting research inquiries on Craigslist was met with equal enthusiasm. It

⁴⁵ Goodstein, Laurie, "Christian Right Failed to Sway Voters on Issues," *New York Times*, November 9, 2012, accessed November 9, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/10/us/politics/christian-conservatives-failed-to-sway-voters.html?pagewanted=all>.

seems that virtual networks become increasingly important in postmodern contexts where people are isolated in private built and mental environments. Workers who feel threatened by corporate surveillance on the clock open up first to Grindr messages and Craigslist posts and then in personal interactions. These issues, including Anthony's narrative, are not handled here given the aforementioned research period and the primarily archival questions that arose during this period. It seems that in order to consider a human subject historically, through an archive, much more time would be needed to do these persons justice. The network created through Grindr and Craigslist did, however, implicitly shape my understanding of Orlando's urban fabric--social media allows researchers to pursue chosen demographics and every new face, or torso, takes you to a neighborhood you may otherwise not see. Virtual networks, unlike physical corporate spaces, permit people to speak freely: it was on Grindr that I heard about Disney's housing for underage, minimum wage workers. When asked to see this space, I was rebuffed, online honesty untranslatable to corporeal truth.

Most Holy Land Experience workers' refusal to talk to me about their jobs or TBN should come as no surprise. Trash cans flanking the park entrance warn pilgrims of the park's heavily copyrighted nature. Visitors are informed that video recording or the reproduction of photographic images is strictly prohibited and will be prosecuted in a court of law. When I tried emailing the park, which lists only one e-mail address for its entire staff, I received two equally negative responses (figs. 4 and 5).



Whitten Overby <whittenoverby@gmail.com>

Ph.D research visit

Info <info@holylandexperience.com>
To: Whitten Overby <wo44@cornell.edu>

Thu, Jul 19, 2012 at 5:41 PM

We are unable to accommodate research students at the Holy Land Experience, or grant interviews, or allow photography in the Scriptorium. Please be advised that the Holy Land Experience is a copyrighted property, and no photos are permitted for educational purposes.
Kind Regards, Info



Whitten Overby <whittenoverby@gmail.com>

interview inquiry

Info <Info@holylanexperience.com>
To: Whitten Overby <wo44@cornell.edu>

Mon, Nov 26, 2012 at 3:03 PM

Thank you for your enquiry. Unfortunately, Holy Land is unable to schedule interviews with staff members.
We send you our best wishes for the success of your studies,
Kind Regards, Info

Sent from my iPad
(Quoted text hidden)

Figures 4 and 5: two e-mails I received from the Holy Land Experience's iPad (author's photos, 2012)

All the Holy Land employees that I encountered displayed the cordial but distant attitude expressed in these emails. My fieldwork therefore depended upon my subjective interaction with and interpretation of the Holy Land Experience. A significant number of tourists exhibited visceral emotional and corporeal responses to the park that thawed my predisposition to skepticism. Participant observation corroborated what I had hoped more extensive ethnographic research would confirm. A plethora of advertising materials and souvenirs supplement the photographic and video archive I constructed of visitors and performers at the park. These items demonstrate the material cultural economy that emerges around Christian consumptive spaces.⁴⁶ More importantly, such an archive could articulate the random and the ritual behaviors that pilgrims pursue within the park as well as the corporate spatial tactics that attempt to maneuver pilgrims. Incorporating such an ethnographic perspective politicizes architectural history by giving subjective experience agency and suggesting that personal histories contribute to the sedimented, ever-evolving creation of spatial meaning.

I am trying to consider my historical research process ethnographically. Time spent in literal, rather than self-constructed, archives and in books, secondary sources, led to the first chapter. Here I make presuppositions about the cultural landscape of Orlando, examining local history's convergence with popular postwar American urban theories. In the second chapter, I integrate secular and Christian histories and begin tracing the relationship between the Holy Land Experience and other corporate spaces. Walking

⁴⁶ Keane, Webb, *Christian Moderns: Freedom and Fetish in the Missionary Encounter* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), esp. 1-35. Keane's introduction demonstrates how material culture may be undergirded by semiotic ideologies, which inform the many products sold at the Holy Land as well as the rhetoric of its architecture and performers.

through an attraction called the Scriptorium not only allowed me to understand how the Holy Land Experience encourages pilgrims to construct their own historiographies but also how postwar spaces encourage users to think in a filmic manner. My final chapter discusses how one may make a non-traditional archive when not allowed to record a copyrighted environment let alone access files concerning its construction and maintenance.

Chapter 1_Theming Orlando and Siting the Holy Land Experience

When I ask my father what he remembers about the first houses he trashed out--a phrase we use to describe the process of entering a home that has been foreclosed upon by the bank, and which the bank would like to sell, and hauling all of what the dispossessed owner has left behind to the nearest dump, then returning to clean the place by spraying every corner and wiping every inch of glass, deleting every fingerprint, scrubbing the book marks off the linoleum, bleaching the cruddy toilets, sweeping up the hair and sand and dust, steaming the stains out of the carpet (or, if the carpet is unsavilavagably rancid, tearing it out), and eventually, thereby, erasing all traces of whoever lived there, dispensing with both their physical presence and the ugly aura of eviction--he says he doesn't remember much. It was too many years ago,

for one thing, well before I started working for him. And since then he has trashed out so much bizarre flotsam, under such strange circumstances, that his memories of those first few houses have faded.⁴⁷
--Paul Reyes, *Exiles in Eden* (2010)

Orlando sits amid the humid, lake-filled Central Florida landscape. A former railroad and military city, it became an international tourist destination in 1971 when Walt Disney World opened. Although the resort is located around ten miles from downtown Orlando, its presence spurred the construction of several other theme parks closer to the city. Perched along I-4 between Disney and the Orlando International Airport (MCO), the Holy Land and these other attractions are intended to lure families away from the Disney monopoly. Built in the height of Florida's real estate bubble, the Holy Land overshot its projected number of visitors quite similarly to the contemporaneous overproduction of commercial and residential structures.⁴⁸ Regardless of the Holy Land's religious agenda, the public's response demonstrates that Orlando was oversaturated with themed spaces far before 2007.

Today, the areas surrounding the Holy Land Experience consist of decaying spray concrete apartment complexes and half-empty strip malls. On the drive from my efficiency to the Holy Land each morning I primarily traversed American Boulevard and I-4. I took a video that captures the lower middle class landscape of the former, a sometimes playpen for upper middle class residents and tourists looking for libidinous thrills and off which I rented an efficiency. Pop radio blaring overhead (southern rap and Rihanna), palm trees, new brick and concrete curbs abutting empty lots, closed motels, and gas stations almost every block: in this environment, you are always stopping in your car next to an empty bus, staring up at an expansive blue and cloud-filled sky under which streetlights and decaying buildings endlessly extend, and losing yourself until the car behind you honks and you must move on. Ads for cheap suits and DUI lawyers sit atop strip clubs and restaurants like China Hot, all byproducts of an unsustainable,

⁴⁷ Reyes, 3. Cf. Soja, Edward W., "Inside Exopolis: Scenes from Orange County," in *Variations on a Theme Park*, 94-122. Soja articulated the alienation and sprawl of the exurb--that amorphous area beyond the suburb in which one-storey structures endlessly extend--far before its economic substructure collapsed in 2007 and 2008.

⁴⁸ Pinsky, 142-43. After the first few weeks, attendance has continuously fallen far below expectations.

car-based postwar American culture. Sunshine somehow makes all of this glimmer with a sense of hope that a similar landscape in Detroit or Chicago would lack, their gray skies laying bare economic depression. Off of American Boulevard are postwar crackerbox houses overlorded by majestic oaks with Spanish moss. This was a neighborhood for middle class locals. The video concludes as I approach my efficiency, adjacent to an old home and two, overgrown volleyball courts. The proprietors told a common story. Disney brought Meredith, a Swede, to Orlando where she found herself stuck; Sam was born and raised there, openly jealous of those who lived in New Urbanist communities. They let the front of their property grow out in order to conceal one of their side businesses. Sam fixes old cars, most of which were parked in a gravel lot prefacing the house. This unhomely carchitecture, an artifact of exurban commercial corporate culture, taken in conjunction with the sprawl described above seems almost like a natural environment it is so pervasive. Sam wants to recuperate and to preserve these abandoned architectures as if they were the national parks of late capitalism.

Paul Reyes, the writer and journalist quoted above, vividly describes this contemporary Floridan landscape. After losing his job in New York during the recent recession, he moved back to the Tampa Bay area to help his father ‘trash out’ abandoned or foreclosed homes. His descriptions gesture towards metaphor and synecdoche, empty houses belying the excess that characterized local real estate developers during an economic upswing. From Reyes’ perspective, monotony overturns memory and erases sedimented human experiences within these built environments; a seemingly endless number of empty homes render tragedy repetitious and its architectural forms as disposable as their contents. The urban history of Orlando suggests that its form, and Florida writ large, did not always rely upon disposable houses and arenas of consumption. Beginning in the late nineteenth-century and then significantly advanced by Walt Disney World’s opening, Florida gradually lost sight of its heritage in favor of a building culture whose short life cycles were funded by an ever-expanding international tourist market.

What follows is a genealogical exploration of how Orlando and Florida functioned like Walt

Disney World, specifically the Magic Kingdom, both before and after 1971. Narrative manipulation, which ferries tourists through particular scenographic vistas to cultivate salable images of places, typifies the city and state's landscapes. This process first occurred through advertising European architectural styles and nature as commodities to early-and-mid-twentieth-century tourists and evolved into the endless expansion of themed entertainment zones, which used pre-fabricated historical architectures to immerse pleasure-seeking visitors in alternate realities too. First civic buildings and public parks and then spaces like Main Street USA within Disney and the New Urbanist town Celebration, also funded by Disney, were designed to draw attention away from places like Americana Boulevard. Orlando's early history as a farming town and minor military base prefaced the ever-extending fabric required to house service sector workers. The city manipulated its self-image to conceal these built environments, to detach itself and to distract non-locals from its less than illustrious past. You find upper middle class consumptive zones close to thoroughfares and less desirable areas several miles out or off of freeway exits unrelated to key area attractions. An unmistakable movement from public to private spaces occurred alongside this dispersal, the early twentieth-century public environments of Orlando giving way to private spaces owned by multinational conglomerates. Against the hopes of Walt Disney who championed urban planner Victor Gruen's 1964 plea to revitalize American downtowns, Orlando's urban fabric bifurcated to house two alternate realities and came to reflect the suburban and exurban sprawl of the postwar period. Orlando differentiated itself from other such landscapes because its economy relies solely upon *middle class family tourism*, making the concealment of lower class and libidinous spaces a necessity rather than just a byproduct of continual growth. The political economy of the Orlando area matured when postmodernism reigned supreme and populated the American landscape with historically derivative architecture. This discussion of the development of Orlando and its themed spaces relates the Holy Land to broader trends and demonstrates that the religious use of such a style also dominated the secular landscape. The Holy Land Experience

reflects Orlando at large and manipulates history, the park's handling of pilgrims similar to the city's funneling of tourists through predetermined pathways.

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Orlando originated as a military outpost during the 1830s' Seminole Indian Wars. The city was officially founded in 1875 following several decades of steady agricultural growth. Citrus farming drove the local economy until the Big Freeze of 1894-95, which decimated the town until the 1920s when it emerged as a train stop on the way to southern Florida's beaches. From the post-Civil War period until the Great Depression, Orlando consisted of neoclassical governmental buildings as well as brick and wood domestic and social spaces. Today, preservation efforts weigh upon citizens as the rapid process of constructing and destroying buildings to meet tourists' demands for contemporary leisure environments decimates the local past. Many of these historic buildings, including the African American gathering place the Westbilt Hotel, are the debris left over from early twentieth-century main streets: boarded up and abandoned, they have fallen into disrepair much like Miami's Overtown district.⁴⁹ Distant from more recent strip malls, these structures exist in a vacuum, the previous urban fabric surrounding them having been torn down decades prior. They illustrate the wasteland that has become of the Americana Walt Disney commercialized in his parks' Main Street USAs.⁵⁰

Tourism drove the Florida economy from the late nineteenth century forward and initiated the erosion of pre-existing built and natural environments. Entrepreneurs like Carl Fischer extended railroads from St. Augustine, the nation's oldest city and a former node of Spanish colonial power, to Miami. Henry

⁴⁹ Lin, Jan, "Heritage, Art, and Community Development in Miami's Overtown and Little Havana," in *The Power of Urban Ethnic Places: Cultural Heritage and Community Life* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 107-164. Cf. Longstreth, Richard, *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Vernacular Architecture* (Washington D.C.: Preservation Press, 1987).

⁵⁰ Brotemarkle, *Beyond the Theme Parks*, esp. 8-24. A local historian with an MA from Rollins, located in Winter Park, Florida, Brotemarkle provides the sole extant history of Central Florida's built environment outside of an extensive Disney literature. The book serves more as a set of facts rather than an analytical assessment of the area. He does, however, indicate that the local preoccupation with preserving the few remaining historic buildings derives from a desire to maintain a history outside of the theme parks. These buildings' authenticity was often compromised as they were frequently disassembled, moved, and reconstructed in order to make way for newer structures.

Flager's Royal Palm Hotel, for example, flourished from its 1897 construction through the 1920s. The East Coast Florida Railroad terminated at this hotel, demonstrating that, while citrus was continuously exported via these rail lines, the state was also encouraging the construction of a leisure market targeted to upper class tourists from America's northeast corridor. The hotel and much of Miami was decimated by a 1926 hurricane, which partially caused the Florida real estate bubble to burst in the same year. Florida hotels built in the thirties forward advertised the same immersive environments used to lure tourists during the state's first boom. Lush trees, crystalline blue water, and animals, among other natural wonders, rendered Florida a place untamed. In reality, infrastructure, leisure space, and lower class service industry housing had increasingly torn through these supposedly pristine landscapes from the 1890s forward.

Neo-classicism exemplified the resorts popping up on Florida's eastern and western coasts before 1926 and reflected the state's desire to give itself a fictional history and the cultural capital that it lacked. Much of St. Augustine, for example, was built up during the late nineteenth century and, as seen in Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*, championed for the relation between designed natural and refined indoor settings.⁵¹ One ambled through formal gardens thinking during the day only to return to one's hotel to reflect upon the revelations furnished by the man-made landscape, which was believed to promote mental and physical wellness. Historically-derivative architecture established the state's use of replicatory immersive environments to attract visitors.⁵² Sociologist Dean MacCannell describes how authenticity becomes a blurry concept as 'real life' emerged as an increasingly representational preoccupation in the modern era. Tourists so desired to witness the real that they no longer questioned whether or not the reality sold to them was staged. The ambiguity of authenticity is a problematic that runs throughout

⁵¹ Wharton, Edith, *The Age of Innocence* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co, 2003). May Welland spends some time in St. Augustine, where she is depicted as maturing as she moves between her hotel's formal gardens and historical interiors. Saint Augustine possesses few of its original sixteenth-century structures, most of them replaced with late nineteenth-century resorts for such elite tourists.

⁵² MacCannell, Dean, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 91-96.

Florida's history. The relative authenticity of the the Biltmore Coral Gables Hotel (1926), which riffed on numerous Italian Renaissance typologies, or the Holy Land Experience's first-century Jerusalem hinges not upon structures that are carbon copies of their precedents but rather upon their ability to synthesize contemporary and historic conditions into a salable whole.⁵³ The resulting built environments employ different materialities and construction methods than their predecessors, making both the building and consumer cultures embodied by these replicas partially nostalgic settings rather than fully present realities. An image of the Florida landscape emerged from harnessing history as a marketing tool that concealed fraud and tax evasion.⁵⁴

The lack of a state income tax led to fast wealth for northeastern businessmen who built up the Florida's early twentieth-century infrastructure and leisure spaces. Legislators encouraged such behavior in hopes of the state gaining national prominence. By mid-century, during the Great Depression, corporate dishonesty continued in the form of real estate tycoons advertising non-existent land to Americans looking for a second home. The WPA published numerous Florida travel guides in an attempt to salvage the state from financial implosion, laying the groundwork for the tourist demographic that Walt Disney and Orlando's other attractions hoped to draw.⁵⁵ The resulting influx of middle class Americans dissolved the state's earlier image as an elite tourist destination and led to its postwar reconfiguration.

Postcards from 1950s Florida demonstrate not only the continued presence of historical spaces as commodities in Miami and St. Augustine but also this phenomena's emergence in Orlando. Their illustrations depict lost perspectives on the Floridian built environment and reveal how civic and hotel

⁵³ Hatton, Hap, *Tropical Splendor: An Architectural History of Florida* (New York: Knopf, 1987), 34-37. The Biltmore has a central belltower, balconies reminiscent of Venetian *palazzi*, and a swimming pool surrounded by a statue of colonnades.

⁵⁴ Cf. Armbuster, Ann, *The Life and Times of Miami Beach* (New York: Knopf, 1995). Armbuster describes the many rises and falls of the Miami real estate market, which generally correspond to the state's economic situation. The city's early history was one full of deals and moguls.

⁵⁵ Hatton, 56-60. Cf. Federal Writers' Project, *The WPA Guide to Florida: The Federal Writers' Project Guide to 1930s Florida* (New York: Pantheon, 1984). This republished guide allows one to examine how Florida was re-marketed during the Great Depression.

architecture as well as landscaping derived from European rather than American sources dominated the state until Walt Disney World's arrival. After this point, touristic authenticity was increasingly found in corporate commercial spaces rather than in natural wonders and old buildings. A 1957 postcard picture book contains images that exhibit how an expanding tourist economy merged with mid-century American abundance in Florida. Alligators, a symmetrical colonial hobby museum, and the nation's oldest house are cited as St. Augustine's notable destinations. While the architecture depicted comes from primarily Spanish Renaissance sources, palm trees and flowers illustrate that the state's unique character came from plant and animal species not found elsewhere in the United States. Postcards of Miami depict similar conditions. A rambling private villa as well as monkey and parrot jungles create a distinct post-war image of the city as a land of environmental preservation rather than consumer-driven saturation. The absence of postcards depicting bourgeois landmarks such as Morris Lapidus' Fontainebleau Hotel (1954) indicates that organizations like the Florida Attractions Association, which produced these postcards three years after that Miami Beach hotel's opening,⁵⁶ coerced potential visitors into viewing the state as an uncharted wilderness rather than an increasingly manufactured and environmentally-controlled space.⁵⁷ The sites depicted in these postcards were not like the majority of spaces that tourists experienced.

Two additional postcards construct a sacred and neo-Palladian landscape that aimed to convince retirees and others to move to the peninsula. The relationship between immortality and a life led under the Florida sun began in 1513 when conquistador Ponce de Leon landed in St. Augustine in search of the Fountain of Youth. The reconstruction of the fountain that de Leon supposedly found occurred in 1904 and

⁵⁶ Several other postcard collections, including the Kroch Rare and Manuscript Library, possess extensive collections of Florida postcards from the same period. All similar collections that I have gone through demonstrate the same bias: the omission of more overtly corporate tourist destinations for natural and local ones.

⁵⁷ Van Slyck, Abigail, *A Manufactured Wilderness: Summer Camps and the Shaping of American Youth, 1890-1960* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006). Van Slyck's book concerns a divergent topic, but she demonstrates how hygiene caused Americans to increasingly separate nature from buildings situated within natural environments. This distinction became more pronounced as modernist architectural style and ideology infiltrated America from the Depression forward. This transformation grafts well onto what the aforementioned postcards depict; her allusive title suggests that, as this process occurred, even nature became a commodity.

since has become a staple in the local tourist industry. A cross shape leading to a bubbling natural spring, actually funneled from an aquifer using water pumps, testifies the degree to which Floridian entrepreneurs were willing to alter history and nature in order to fabricate a landscape dedicated to pleasure and wellness. Elderly snowbirds visited the site in hopes of restoring their youth, but left with dashed hopes. The cross' presence indicates how the site evolved into a Christian tourist destination prized for its revivifying waters after its initial purpose proved less successful. While not explicitly a baptismal space, tourists were drawn by the potential for watery salvation.

As seen in another 1957 postcard, the First Methodist Church of Orlando's primary entrance and dome, part of the original structure, are reminiscent of Villa Rotonda, but its subsequent additions undo this symmetry. As at the Fountain of Youth, nature encloses this religious site and reveals that post-war postcards of Florida were intended for the middle classes tired of sooty northern cities: the majority of postcards in both Cornell's archive and in my collection were mailed to New York state, Boston, Detroit, Chicago, and other major mid-century northern American cities. Text on the back of the First Methodist postcard praises the building and creates a clear relationship between Orlando, "a fast-growing resort and distributing community" that houses "most of Florida's citrus fruit banking," and its expanding religious communities. The First Methodist Church received six additions from its 1882 origins to 1956, evolving with Orlando. Such historic buildings, according to the postcard, commingled with the city's thirty-three lakes and parks to create a charged epithet, the City Beautiful.

Orlando's appropriation of this term, made known in America at the 1893 Chicago World Columbian Exhibition, demonstrates the local impulse to use a popular style to lend the city a natural *and* manmade history. Other postcards depicting neoclassical buildings announce the many local attractions of Orlando and were widely circulated in the immediate postwar era. They suggest not only that Orlando figured itself as a tourist destination before Disney arrived but also that its residents' desired a visually arresting hometown. A culture of mass-produced aesthetic legislation emerged from this City Beautiful

movement. By forcing prominent buildings to share the stylistic language of white neoclassical structures, municipal authorities laid the groundwork for the area's future themed spaces, especially Disney's use of late nineteenth-century American forms throughout its Magic Kingdom and later New Urbanist developments that drew upon the neo-traditional language of 'Main Street USA' to sell an upper middle class identity. Cultural capital was first associated belonging to a church, a means of asserting social prominence for Americans through World War II, and participating in civic activities like visiting a park. It shifted to the consumer realm in the postwar period as the Disneyfication of the American landscape occurred. Domestic and corporate designers streamlined the privatization of American space by incorporating architectural forms and landscaping devices established in early-and-mid-twentieth-century public spaces. Idealized images of American life were increasingly available in commodifiable parts.

The few historic structures still dotting Orlando's landscape exemplify how the small town lagged behind the state's early twentieth-century concomitant architectural and economic boom. Its more recent growth has forced developers to rely more heavily upon commercial architecture and postmodern design techniques than those who planned Miami, Tampa, or Jacksonville, the state's other major cities. In those three contexts, Spanish colonial, Prairie School, and Art Deco architecture predominated until after World War II.⁵⁸ Orlando's comparatively small population did not prevent the military and corporate investors in these other cities from coming to Orlando both during and after the war. This influx spurred the area's first population boom. The Army Air Corps built the Orlando Air Force Base in 1940, which, by 1943, was training pilots for covert military operations. The air base evolved through the 1960s when the the Navy Training Center and an adjacent hospital were added to the original base. Over 18,000 people moved to the greater Orlando area as a result. Such population expansion parallels, on a much smaller scale,

⁵⁸ Cf. Brotemarkle. He bases his entire argument off of local and touring populations' inability to look beyond this recent past to consider the area's earlier architectural and urban forms. Ironically, much of the vernacular he describes has been relocated--removed from the original site and placed elsewhere. Such an intentional manipulation demonstrates planners' attempts to conceal local history (the vernacular, neotraditional) in favor of the re-created (late modern and postmodern) spaces found at the Holy Land Experience and elsewhere.

contemporaneous growth in southern California, where nuclear testing grounds and other significant military design and training bases were built during and immediately after the war as well.⁵⁹ This military history goes continuously unmentioned, as if elided by Orlando as to not tarnish its cultivated ‘safe,’ ‘familial’ labels with wartime traumas.

Military presence prefaced the expansion of Orlando in the decades after World War II when Americans turned to consumer culture to define themselves. Outside of Los Angeles, Disneyland, which was located on former farmland in Anaheim, California, opened in 1955 and provided immersive entertainment to local white, middle class families. As the park’s popularity skyrocketed and drew national and even international tourists, tawdry motels, strip clubs, and gas stations infected the area immediately surrounding the park and foreshadowed the sort of growth that Walt Disney World catalyzed in greater Orlando. From 1971, when Disney opened its first Orlando theme park, through 2010, the city’s population more than doubled from 99,000 to 238,000. While it was ambivalent to regional expansion, the Disney Corporation sought to prevent the teeming underbelly that ensconced its California park by acquiring an extensive swath of land. Several of Disney’s lawyers began buying up property in Osceola County, slightly southwest of Orlando proper, under false names like the Reedy Creek Ranch Corporation before, in August 1965, announcing plans to open an east coast alternative to Disneyland.

The Florida legislature granted Disney the rights of an incorporated city, excusing them from any present or future land use laws and only requiring them to pay property taxes and allow elevator inspections. By 1968, the Florida Supreme Court declared that this new city could issue municipal bonds solely for Disney’s benefit, permitting them to pay even fewer national and local taxes. These legal precedents have led to theme parks and major tourist attractions continuously pressuring the Florida state government for tax breaks. The corporation as puppeteer of political authorities is visible at the Holy Land

⁵⁹ Cf. Davis, Mike, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (New York: Verso, 2006). Davis continually points to Los Angeles’ militarized landscape as a catalyst for its twentieth-century growth.

Experience. Its two owners have intensively controlled its images to advocate particular beliefs and through these values lobbied for tax exemptions.

Orlando and its destinations altered their histories to appear other than they are. The city's concealment of its pasts as a farming and military town required narrative manipulation as extensive as that employed within the Magic Kingdom. The very infrastructures that led to and continued to contribute to the community's economic diversity and success were hidden behind the streamlined middle class tourist spectacles presented on highways that funnel these groups to and from key destinations. Fantastical and historical illusions presented in these spaces rely upon a substructure in which the magic on display is constructed. At Walt Disney World, a complex set of underground changing rooms, storage areas, and repair shops undergird the entire park, while at the Holy Land Experience an office park adjacent to the attraction serves as a similar preparatory space.

Narrative manipulation typifies not only the ways in which the Disney Corporation constructs a singular, predetermined route through its parks, as Karal Ann Marling has demonstrated, but also Orlando and its many other corporate built environments.⁶⁰ Storyboards, first used to plot out each scene in a Disney film, became a common means of designing the urban microcosms of theme parks because they orchestrated the tourist's progression through successive vistas, or different themed architectures. At the Holy Land Experience, one enters a bustling Jerusalem marketplace before following a performance schedule. Pilgrims go from Morning Praise and Worship to Sermon on the Mount, for example. In the process, they pass statues, landscaping features, and attractions that they barely have time to consider.

⁶⁰ Marling, Karal Ann, "Imagineering the Disney Theme Parks," in *Designing Disney's Theme Parks: the Architecture of Reassurance*, ed. Karal Ann Marling (Paris: Flammarion, 1997), 83. In her description of the Disney's early parks, Marling articulates surveillance and control factors that began with Disneyland and continue to permeate themed spaces: "Reassurance and control--the fact that somebody else wrote the script by building outlines of buildings out of two-by-fours and propping them up to test just what you could see from Scene One, when you were standing outside the Main Street Emporium, looking north toward the Hub, or from the start of Scene Two, where Main Street flows gently into a corner soda fountain--are not qualities readily associated with the Modernist canon. At least not when control is placed in the service of reassurance. Making someone feel good is what good greeting cards do, what the worst kind of kitsch does. But not art. Great art tells you to have a nice day."

Filmic techniques of cuts, transitions, and long takes provide the structural framework that coheres the park's individual elements. While the Holy Land was constructed under the aegis of a local ministry, its initial owners clearly drew upon formal tactics that televangelists and other Christian entertainment conglomerates employ to coerce television viewers. Trinity Broadcasting Network's purchase of the park reflects the increasingly corporate nature of the Orlando landscape, but both owners notably employed the Disney template that uses normative spatial strategies to ease visitors into more particular goals.

Amusement parks, differentiated from theme parks by attractions that do not congeal under a singular aesthetic or narrative, sprung up in Orlando as early as the Great Depression. Their lack of a coherent logic became less effective as tourists were anaesthetized by corporate engineering that directed them through architecturally and urbanistically streamlined attractions, lines, live shows, and gift stores. At Walt Disney World, almost every ride's conclusion spills out into a room brimming with souvenirs, while the Holy Land Experience forces pilgrims to walk through many stores to reach its various sites. The landscape surrounding these parks contain many unified thematic experiences from dining options that place consumers in China, Texas, and rain forests to shopping establishments that take one to New York and Paris. Such postmodern immersions dull consumers' desire for less cohesive diversions. Cypress Gardens (1936-2008), located in Winter Haven, Florida, was one of the region's most popular amusement parks. Owned by a local family for several generations, Legoland Orlando bought the park in 2008 and, in 2010, decimated the landmark to build the toy company's newest theme park. Destinations like Cypress Gardens sprung up along highways from the 1930s through the 1960s. RV parks and two story motels--the sort of decorated sheds celebrated in *Learning from Las Vegas* (1972; 1977)--abbutted these diversions and contributed to the state's early sprawl.⁶¹ A decade later, as Disney and other entertainment conglomerates populated the central Florida landscape, this commercial vernacular was pushed farther and

⁶¹ Venturi, Robert, Denise Scott Brown, and Steve Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1977), 87-100. Ducks are buildings whose symbolism upends their legibility and usefulness, while decorated sheds prioritize function.

farther away from the area's central corporate nodes and the minds of tourists. Even major hotel chains like the Holiday Inn have adapted to this competitive market. At one Orlando location, they have expanded its usual interior spatial distributions and rendered their standard beige facade a castle. In central Florida, the duck long ago overtook the decorated shed.

Horizontal growth typifies Orlando and many other postwar American cities. Austrian urban planner, architect, and theorist Victor Gruen, a hypocrite for at once maligning the city center's death while making his name off of shopping mall designs, was one of the first to observe this pattern in his *The Heart of Our Cities* (1964).⁶² Two of his diagrams demonstrate the structure of American sprawl. The first separates the urban core from various fringe settlements using a circular diagram, a microcosmic reflection of how urban spaces relate to global geographies. He implies, through assigning each sphere a functional if wasteful role, that our society insists upon colonizing all space. Even circulatory areas take on the characteristics of occupation and are adorned with exit signs, trash, and rest stops that bind transitional spaces to their immediate surroundings.

Maps of various theme parks reflect this growth pattern. At both the Holy Land Experience and the Magic Kingdom, a centralized, man-man landscape, a core of sorts, sends visitors to various peripheral areas, each with attractions keyed to a certain theme or narrative. Gruen describes this American urban design trend by contrasting European and American cities with their surroundings. The former possess a far more concentrated core and comparatively minimal peripheries. The Disney and TBN theme parks are characterized by the same sort of sprawl as American cities like Los Angeles and Chicago despite their claims otherwise. Roadside advertisements serve as the first regional markers as one approaches them, followed by the infrastructure explicitly leading to a given park's entrance, and then one drives through

⁶² Gruen, Victor, *The Heart of Our Cities* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1964). See note 25 on Manheim. Although this book was published just a year before Walt Disney's death, he was supposedly very taken with its ideas regarding the revitalization of American urban core. Gruen heavily influenced not only the Magic Kingdom but also the proposed adjacent city of tomorrow, Epcot, whose current form represents an almost complete divergence from Disney's original intentions.

ceremonial arched entryways at both Disney parks and the Holy Land Experience. Parking lots here function as the city space, mediating the surrounding region--ads and transit areas--with the urban core, the consumptive region. The theme park serves as a typological reflection of these broader metropolitan growth patterns because, along with the shopping mall, it developed in the immediate postwar period. In a more metaphorical sense, Disney, TBN, and other entertainment conglomerates create their own urban and suburban sprawl by selling TV shows, movies, toys, books, computer games, and other small, commodifiable goods that produce similar, if miniature, visual environments in private homes. These residences, in turn, would often employ styles depicted in various entertainments. Through these means, large corporations normalize their ever-expanding presence across the American landscape. Gruen best articulates the ethos that led to the suburb and exurb in which such goods are consumed:

Although economically we still have mountains and abysses, multimillionaires and the abjectly poor, the medium plateau of a vast and growing middle-class society fills, to an increasing degree, the area between economic peaks and valleys; and the flatness of the new middle class covers the land⁶³

A 1941 comprehensive city planning report for Orlando reveals the accuracy of Gruen's claims two decades prior.⁶⁴ Although the larger metropolitan area that would later emerge is not included in the map, concentric circles illustrate the relationship between core and periphery preoccupied American planners even before World War II's conclusion. This report proposed aesthetic legislation--streets of a certain width, dredging and development around the area's numerous lakes, and so on--that seemingly led to the area's postwar City Beautiful movement and preconditioned locals for Walt Disney World and other theme parks' tight hold over the design and planning processes. Governmental interventions during and immediately after World War II established precedents that corporations took advantage of as the American consumer market expanded. After Disney and other attractions arrived, nature, visible in the First Methodist Church and other postcards of the area, disappeared as even landscape came under

⁶³ Ibid, 64.

⁶⁴ Ithaca, NY, Cornell University, Kroch Rare and Manuscript Collection, Henry S. Churchill Papers.

entertainment conglomerates' control. Disney and the Orlando planning board all bemoaned the loss of an urban center and a connection to nature, but, ironically, both catalyzed growth patterns antithetical to their intentions.

While the demographics Gruen draws upon have dramatically shifted since 1964, Orlando's landscape was shaped by the desire to render leisure a salable commodity for the middle class. The relative population of its urban core and the surrounding metropolitan region corresponds to the postwar sprawl typified by Gruen. According to the 2010 United States Census, the urban core contained around 230,000, the surrounding city 1.3 million, and the metropolitan area over 2.1 million.⁶⁵ Several factors contribute to the area's continued growth, including the establishment of New Urbanist neighborhoods and towns, the evolving experience economy, Florida's lax tax codes (no state income and quite lenient on large corporations promising to bring new jobs), and a shifting religious landscape.⁶⁶

New Urbanism, a movement promoted by Disney and whose founders include Miami-based architects Andrés Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, aims to construct communities that did not rely upon automobile transit. The area's two primary such neighborhoods--Celebration, a community funded by a subsidiary of the Walt Disney Corporation, and Baldwin Park, a suburb closer to Orlando's city center--encourage an eco-friendly, diversified revival of Main Street USA. Yet the aesthetic legislation required by the movement forces every structure to employ a neo-traditional, 1950s suburban stylistic language. The resulting built environments revive an image of a normative, white middle class updated for the neoliberal era. These interventions demonstrate the continuity of Orlando's earlier City Beautiful movement. A desire for a laid-back but elegant, tree-enclosed lifestyle exemplifies both movements and suggests that locals as well as tourists also sought pleasure in Orlando. Celebration helped the metropolitan

⁶⁵ "Orlando, FL 2010 Census Data," accessed January 25, 2013, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/12/1253000.html>.

⁶⁶ These tax codes and other incentives are rarely discussed or understood by the American public, their brief mention during the real estate bubble's burst in 2007 and 2008, an indicator of how these harmful laws are concealed even in relation to situations they create.

area attain international prominence in the design community as its other major landmarks are not commonly considered exemplars of high architecture. As a community master planned by Robert Stern and including buildings by prominent postmodern architects including Philip Johnson, Aldo Rossi, and Charles Moore, Celebration represents one of the most comprehensive realizations of New Urbanist tenets and American postmodernist architecture.⁶⁷

Yet even Celebration has been hit by the collapse of Florida's real estate market and rapid technological advances. Caesar Pelli's AMC Movie Theater, which opened with the original downtown, is now closed. Tourists still pose in front of the rounded neo-Art Deco building, demonstrating the degree to which they have embraced the experience of empty, postmodern spaces as memorable. Its style resembles a theme park attraction and suggests that recent entertainment zones possess a homogenized language. Such a leveling of design cultivates a similar, passive feeling among patrons whether they attend a film, ride go carts, or visit a theme park: the rhetoric of corporate pleasure spaces inculcates a consumptive rather than pragmatic mentality.

Celebration's religious architecture, especially the neo-Spanish colonial Corpus Christi Catholic and Community Presbyterian churches, reveal how even community-based religious institutions bear the traces of post-recession desolation, their high postmodern aesthetics unable to resuscitate them from the consumerist mentality cultivated by goods like the Hummer SUV found in the latter's parking lot. The City Beautiful and New Urbanist visions of Orlando share the desire for an aesthetically unified city. Taken in conjunction with the earlier First Methodist building, these three churches demonstrate an association with earlier religious architecture in order to lend their broader context historic authenticity. The Holy Land Experience's intent does not dramatically differ from these buildings beyond their different historical

⁶⁷ Ross, Andrew, *The Celebration Chronicles* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1999). Ross, an NYU professor, moved to Celebration for a year to conduct ethnographic research. While he intended to write a scathing critique, his time in the town brought him close to its initial residents, who were struggling to turn the ideality they were sold into a reality. Walt Disney under Michael Eisner employed Michael Graves and numerous other postmodernists to build much of the corporate architecture Disney uses through the present day.

allusions. Whereas the Celebration churches allude to nineteenth-century American churches, the Holy Land looks farther back to first-century Jerusalem. A lack of conventional authenticity may be found in these locations, their simultaneous contemporary and historical referents creating a disjunction for casual observers. Only the faithful seem to understand that physical contact with sacred built environments determines their effectiveness.

The “experience economy,” a term coined in 1998 by economists Joseph Pine II and James Gilmore, emphasizes how immaterial rather than material commodities have become consumers’ primary concern.⁶⁸ The average buyer, under this paradigm, ranks seeing a film or visiting an amusement park above purchasing goods. The relative truthfulness of an experience is superseded by what it markets itself as: the Holy Land Experience enacts corporeal biblical narratives before visitors stroll through TBN advertisements and gift shops. Although the experience economy likely influenced the construction of both Celebration and the Holy Land Experience, its importance has fluctuated over the past decade and a half. Brands continue to use this economy to subliminally advertise other goods, but an increasing emphasis on how environments transform rather than momentarily entertain individuals has emerged from this seminal study. This shift alters tourists’ expectations and complicates environments that emerged before this change. The hegemony of Disney demonstrates the continued appeal of immediate gratification despite that company’s catalysis of this paradigm.

The Holy Land typifies the transition from experience to transformation, especially in its transfer from Zion’s Hope to TBN. While the crucifixion was staged up to three times a day, weather permitting, a daily passion play followed by an optional baptism is now offered. Both performances ‘stage’ dramas for an audience, a primary tenet of the experience economy, but the TBN’s schedule allows visitors so

⁶⁸ Pine, Joseph II and James Gilmore, *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre and Every Business a Stage* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1999). Cf. Klingmann, Anna, *Brandscapes: Architecture in the Experience Economy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007). Klingmann wrote the first architectural text that draws upon the concepts of the experience economy. She provides a broad theoretical overview, presenting not only corporate motives but also intended as well as actual effects.

experientially moved to be ‘guided’ through a transformative process after the performance.⁶⁹ Violence no longer serves as the primary element intended to move audiences. Instead, the revamped park incorporates visitors into its narrative over the day’s course and ushers them towards a Christian transformation rather than numbing them. Baptism concludes the eight-hour pilgrimage offered within the park as Christ shepherds each tourist into the pool, and the afterlife.

More complex, less theoretical economic conditions undergird Orlando’s continuous ability to expand. Walt Disney World continues its tradition of bending tax laws. In 2011, it was discovered that Walt Disney Company sold tickets, hotel rooms, and other services provided within its registered city to a subsidiary, the Walt Disney Travel Company, to reap a larger profit. These individual amenities were packaged as deals and then placed at a higher market price, but the Walt Disney Company acquires profits from and pays taxes only on the Travel Company’s discounted rather than full priced packages.⁷⁰ Such easy money set the standard for the manipulation of tax codes continued at the Holy Land Experience.

The Orange County Property Appraiser claimed, in 2002, that the park owed over one million in unpaid property taxes. This dispute continued until 2006 when the Florida legislature approved a bill exempting all theme parks that aimed to educate and interpret the Bible from paying taxes. Not only did the back taxes remain uncollected, but the park’s annual property tax of \$300,000 was also waived. In exchange for this significant tax exemption, the Holy Land Experience must offer one day of free admission every year.⁷¹ More recently, the Crouch family, owners of TBN, have encountered their own

⁶⁹ Ibid, 198. Experience is defined as something that is staged and, unlike a material good, ephemeral, whereas transformation concerns individuals rather than events. While the book claims that customization and individualization occur as the experience economy expands, it fails to present a counter argument that such an economy developed out of corporations’ desire to abstract the homogenized consumption of goods.

⁷⁰ Garcia, Jason, “Loophole Lets Theme Parks Cut Tax Bills,” *Orlando Sentinel*, May 25, 2011, accessed January 25, 2013, http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2011-05-25/news/os-disney-vacation-package-taxes-20110525_1_tax-bills-theme-parks-disney-vacations.

⁷¹ Clark, Sara K., “To Save Taxes, Holy Land Experience Will Be Free Oct. 5,” *Orlando Sentinel*, September 16, 2010, accessed January 25, 2013,

financial difficulties. Brittany Loper, the granddaughter of TBN figureheads Jan and Paul Crouch, filed two lawsuits against the company, one for wrongful termination and the other for its abuse of nonprofit organization tax codes as well as manipulative bookkeeping procedures. In May 2012, the *New York Times* published an extensive article including the Crouches' digitized tax records that made public their corruption.⁷² Such money handling not only continues a tradition of televangelical excess but also indicates that Florida seeks, above all, to ensure the continued success of its tourist industry. In 2012, under the Holy Land Experience umbrella, the Crouches filed tax exemption requests for two mansions in the Orlando suburb Windmere. TBN claimed the residences housed visiting pastors and priests and Jan Crouch went as far as to cite one as her permanent residence. Proof of neither claim was substantiated and the request was denied. It appears as though the Crouches seek to maintain their lavish lifestyle as their target demographic--evangelicals--ages, retires, and has less money to spend on enter- or edu-tainment.

TBN has sought to expand the Holy Land's intended audience to include the non-Protestants. Just as its search for tax breaks may be read as a means of maintaining a certain lifestyle, so too may this move convey TBN's placement of corporate profits over a streamlined moral message or ideology. Yet the religious demographics of Orlando have dramatically shifted since 2000 and demonstrate the need for a corporation with such specific aims to appear impartial. According a local religious survey, Orlando's Muslim and Roman Catholic populations grew the most from 2000 to 2010 as the number of Baptists and evangelicals significantly declined.⁷³ These numbers are especially revealing when compared with a 2007

http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2010-09-16/travel/os-holy-land-free-admission-20100916_1_holy-land-experience-property-tax-exemption-property-appraiser.

⁷² Eckholm, Erik, "Family Battle Offers Look inside Lavish TV Ministry," *New York Times*, May 4, 2012, accessed January 25, 2013,

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/05/us/tbn-fight-offers-glimpse-inside-lavish-tv-ministry.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

⁷³ Kunerth, Jeff, "Muslims Grow, Baptists Decline in Metro Orlando, Religion Census Says," *Orlando Sentinel*, May 1, 2012, accessed January 25, 2013,

http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2012-05-01/features/os-religion-census-muslims-grow-20120501_1_mormons-and-muslims-mormon-church-imam-tariq-rasheed. Cf. Briggs, Billy, "An Orlando Theme Park of Biblical Proportions," *NBC News* December 10, 2012, accessed April 1, 2013,

http://www.nbcnews.com/id/40725621/ns/travel-destination_travel/t/orlando-theme-park-biblical-proportions/.

poll of Florida, in which 94.5% of the population claims Judeo-Christian beliefs and 20.6% cites evangelical Protestantism as their denomination.⁷⁴ While the local population does not likely serve as the park's primary target audience, it indicates that longstanding conceptions of Florida and other southern states as bastions of the Moral Majority and other conservative activist groups is eroding as new demographics move into the area. Orlando's changing population demonstrates the large scale diversification of American cities and illustrates the need for many different nationalities to work in the service sector. International tourists must be eased into immersive themed environments that function entirely in English so they feel comfortable enough to spend.

The Holy Land Experience asserts itself as distinctly American and resists the globalization of the local tourist industry. It recreates Jerusalem for those unable to visit, explicitly claims that the USA represents the apotheosis of the modern nation state in its Scriptorium museum tour, and, since TBN's takeover, has reached out to the local, expanding Latino community in addition to its preexisting African American and white clientele. These expanding racial demographics correspond to different religious cultures, especially Catholic and other Christian denominations formerly ostracized from the park. Although the Disney theme parks in Shanghai, Tokyo, and Paris function as disseminators of American culture and taste, they play into the increasingly international marketplace. TBN airs its programming outside of the United States, but, unlike Disney's alteration of its parks to depict different nationalities and incorporate local food traditions, TBN makes no attempt to conceal its distinctly American Christianity. Postmodern Christian consumerism, which harnesses toys, movies, candy, and other conventional entertainment forms for religious purposes, originated in the postwar United States but has since spread to

Statistics for the Holy Land's tourist demographics are not readily available, but this 2010 article claims that the park has 2,000 visitors a day--a seeming success despite the intense corporate oversight that refuses to reveal the denominational, racial, and other characteristics of the park's attendees.

⁷⁴ Kellstedt, Lyman A., and James L. Guth, "Religion and Political Behavior in the Sunbelt," in *Sunbelt Rising: The Politics of Place, Space, and Region*, ed. Michelle Nickerson and Darren Dochuk (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 116-17.

South Korea, Latin America, and elsewhere.⁷⁵

Roman Catholicism and Islam are the faiths of Orlando's new citizens, Latino and Muslim Americans relocating from the northeast who are drawn by affordable housing and a warmer climate. While these motives have always driven Florida's growth, the resulting cultural and religious landscapes shift as consistently as, and likely cause the constant turnover of, the commercial vernacular that feeds off of Walt Disney World. The Holy Land Experience typifies the peak of such postmodern overabundance: its materials expendable, its market share far inferior to its competitors, its demographic (evangelicals and non-denominational types over forty five) too small, its price too high for its contents, and its performance schedule like a straight-to-video, eight-hour musical drama with the same cast members playing different roles.

On the average day at the Holy Land Experience, one may observe religious revelation and narratives tweaked first by Zionist apocalyptic creed and then by televangelical corporate whitewashing all without waiting in lines. At Disney, a temporary intimacy develops between adjacent strangers as they anticipate the forthcoming attraction, long lines cultivating a secular rather than religious closeness. Pilgrims to the Holy Land drift through entire buildings alone, as I did at the Scriptorium, and they are given time to wander in the many landscaped biblical scenes. This comparative ability to choose without the pressure of lines, a signifier of an attraction's value to each pilgrim within the park's marketplace, empowers the individual tourist. An intimacy derived from visibly shared beliefs binds pilgrims who you continuously encounter during the day; you do not lose one another in the park's miasma as at Disney. Despite the arguable inauthenticity of their imitative architectures and their relative popularity, almost all theme parks encourage each visitor to customize their prepackaged experience based upon personal

⁷⁵ Cf. O'Neill, Kevin Lewis, *City of God: Christian Citizenship in Postwar Guatemala* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010) and Kim, Young Joon, "Megachurch Growth in Korea," Ph.D. diss, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2011. Megachurches in South Korea and Latin America have received attention as neoliberal spaces, religious means of integrating late capitalism into markets with more growth potential than the United States.

tastes. The few options presented by theme parks' corporate architects convince tourists that their experiences are unique. Every individual or group determines their own course and perceives their chosen route in a different manner. Most paths and rides within parks bear signs of human wear and this patina reflects an accumulation of interpretations. As American Boulevard and the sprawl of strip clubs, low rent apartment complexes, sex stores, and groceries demonstrate, Orlando not only possesses endless simulated realities and themed worlds but also the debris of postwar American expansion. The city asks tourists to make as many choices outside as within the park.

Walt Disney World thrived based upon this method, which brought Orlando success at the cost of its City Beautiful self-image. The Holy Land Experience sits almost atop the interstate, an advertisement for fading televangelical corporations and an articulation of late neoliberalism's alliance with the religious right.⁷⁶ A relationship between automobile transit, large built environments as corporate road signs, and oil consumption emerges from these two parks. This matrix suggests that the megachurch boomed in postwar America because cars, the primary means of transit, became pilgrim movers and rendered the weekly church visit or even the yearly Holy Land Experience sojourn into a religio-technical experience. The replaceability of most postmodern spaces and transit mechanisms explains not only the Holy Land Experience's siting and construction methods but also gestures at the secular forces driving the central Florida economy, a focus on profit rather than durability.

Orlando's growth corroborates the general desire to escape into an alternate or idealized reality. These fleeting experiences resist preservation and undermine the long term memory of its users. Unless you visit a theme park numerous times, you recall your trip primarily through postcards, other souvenirs, and photographs taken by cameras and cellphones, each visually replicating significant attractions rather than enabling you to recall them through other senses. With personal interaction between performers and visitors that attempts to include tourists in a cohesive daily narrative, the Holy Land Experience offers an

⁷⁶ Harvey, 80-81.

alternative to the thrills provided by isolated attractions. This experiential emphasis makes understanding the logic of pop ephemera especially complex because, unlike Disney attractions with repeating animatronics, performers' small behavioral deviations lend each day at the Holy Land a distinctive character. Moreover, continuous performances and specific architectural monuments carry pilgrims throughout their days, again unlike Disney where tourists walk through generalized themed environments that connect rides each rooted in a different story rather than connected to as cohesive a narrative as Christ's life. Yet, in following late modern urban planning strategies that primed Orlando for its growth, the park reflects rather than combats the spatial paradigms mistakenly established by Victor Gruen and Walt Disney. It separates itself thematically from its immediate surroundings but corresponds to the region's broader characteristics, disavowing local history in favor of commodifiable historical recreations.

Rem Koolhaas presents a cynical reading of such postmodern environments in "Junkspace":

The built product of modernization is not modern architecture but Junkspace. Junkspace is what remains after modernization has run its course, or, more precisely, what coagulates while modernization is in progress, its fallout...it is the essence, the main thing...the product of an encounter between escalator and air-conditioning, conceived in an incubator of Sheetrock (all three missing from the history books). Continuity is the essence of Junkspace; it exploits any invention that enables expansion, deploys the infrastructure of seamlessness: escalator, air-conditioning, sprinkler, fire shutter, hot-air curtain...⁷⁷

All of the above characteristics may be found throughout Orlando and the Holy Land Experience. The park schedules its daily outdoor entertainments and time for exploring its landscapes in the early morning to avoid Florida's oppressive climate. The Church of All Nations, the Scriptorium, the Last Supper, and other indoor adventures become loci of activity once the sun beats down on visitors. Not only the built environment but also the behavior encouraged at the Holy Land reflect "continuity": similar movements through a prescribed set of spaces quickly create a sense of visual homogeneity.

What Koolhaas fails to account for is the postmodern condition and how it influences the experience of space. His theoretical claims usually reveal socio-political truths about architecture and

⁷⁷ Koolhaas, "Junkspace," 175.

urbanism, but specificity often eludes him. As articulated by a theologian in the Scriptorium's accompanying educational DVD, postmodernism is characterized by individual interpretation.⁷⁸ While this claim is here made in opposition to lost authorial, or divine, power, it suggests that each pilgrim to the Holy Land Experience may read its architecture, planning, performances, and stores in a different manner. Junkspace may be easily expandable, and memory lost along with small, cheap souvenirs. At the Holy Land Experience, it encloses and furnishes immediate, full body revelation.

In a video of the park's morning prayer service, the benefits of narrative manipulation and the power of junkspace are manifest. Performers ask pilgrims to sing along to the anthemic "How Great is Our God," both groups primarily covered by shade and protected from the sun's glare, worshipping without suffering. Security cameras and the technical crew are visible, the technological and security substructure of the prayer service evident but either unnoticed or irrelevant in comparison to the song itself. The TBN corporate logo marks each concrete bench in the audience. Golden columns and pilasters onstage and on the arena's sides further divorce this recreation of the Temple of Jerusalem from its historical actuality. As my camera tracked through the space, I noticed other pilgrims recording the event, fellow pirates. Various worlds were unfurling. Many pilgrims seemed ambivalent to being immersed in Jerusalem, a husband flailing his arms in the air as his wife studied the day's schedule, their daughter grasping a column and looking back at her parents, confused as to whose response to imitate.

And then the heroines of my day, two passionate women in the far right corner of the Temple, the lyrics pouring from their mouths as if memorized and their arms dancing up, down, in, and out, sculpting the air to express their faith. Here you see the architecture of the everyday in which the consumer, unaware of scholarly and design-based prioritization of aesthetics, uses their mind and their body to create a history.

⁷⁸ *The Scriptorium: The Story of the Bible*, DVD (2006; Orlando, FL: Holy Land Experience Productions, 2006). Dr. Bill Jones says: "One of the problems with postmodernism is that meaning is found with the interpreter not in the author. People think meaning is 'what I understand.' That is never correct. Meaning always begins with the author or the source--what *that* person wanted to communicate!"

At the Holy Land, we find experience outdoes the historic paradigms of classical architecture and junkspace the park so adroitly synthesizes. This stylistic combination reflects Orlando at large, its iterations as a City Beautiful and Mouse town equally hybrid. While situating consumers in such inauthentic environments and concealing the infrastructure necessary to furnish devotional and secular entertainments remains problematic, the joy of the prayer service undercuts the potency of such a reading.

Many of the spaces I have described provided a similar, unexpected degree of comfort. Downtown Orlando was still Beautiful. Disney has become an increasingly powerful icon for American innocence lost, embodied by neo-traditional architecture that hugs visitors while pushing them to consume. American Boulevard lives up to its name, the very Main Street the Magic Kingdom rails against, libidinous sprawl washed out by the expansive sky above. My efficiency, where the shower spewed gray water from the dishwasher next door and rotting cars framed its entrance, was redolent of some dystopic movie I'd seen but only half-remember. Celebration, Florida, master planned by conservatives and the subject of many leftists critiques, proved the most compelling town I'd visited in years. Postmodern urbanism produced each of these spaces and surrounds the Holy Land Experience. Although the remainder of this paper focuses on this final site, it should be noted, in spite of the corporate and municipal manipulation of built environments inherent to Orlando's history, all of these spaces moved me. Driving and walking through them I realized that individual actions could be historiographical, that our experiences could not only respond to the sources we read and the archives we visit but could also build upon and deviate from the actions of previous tourists and pilgrims.

Chapter 2_Ghosts in the Scriptorium and Beyond

This cultural history of Orlando's landscape only hints at the ghosts that architectural theorist Reinhold Martin teases out in relation to postmodern architecture, the sorts of built environments that populate a city that, other than Walt Disney World, demands to be historicized. The previous chapter also evades Michel de Certeau's discussion of the need to record spaces and consumption patterns in the present so more than fragments will remain. As Florida's postmodern bubble has burst, historians should gather and problematize extant traces of this recent past.

Martin claims that postmodernism, which he sees as originating out of Europe's post-war traumas, has fused past with present. As this style spread globally, users of such built environments move among the "ghosts of our [their] former selves."⁷⁹ The Holy Land Experience's first iteration under Zion's Hope haunts the current park. Pilgrims may still move through spaces designed to cultivate a specific apocalyptic evangelical creed rather than the non-denominational corporate agenda set by TBN. The Scriptorium was

⁷⁹ Martin, *Utopia's Ghost*, 179. While I am relating Martin and de Certeau here, Martin, the far more recent author, does not mention de Certeau once in this book. He also does not cite authors who emphasize the sensory experience of space, opening his theories to many new avenues he does not explore. Perhaps scholars handling more canonical topics evade a focus on the experiential because it could devalue their well-known topics and their contribution to a historiography where every new fact can make a career.

the last building constructed by the initial owners and consists of a fifty-five minute tour that highlights the relationship between Christianity, printing technology, and Protestant ideology. In this attraction, one progresses through the history of the western world in fourteen rooms decorated with animatronic figures, historically allusive plaster interiors, and rare books donated by the Van Kampen family.⁸⁰ If space here functions as a ghostly reflection of its past proprietors, then my affinity for the Scriptorium and the Holy Land derives from my past relationships to postmodern and religious architecture.

Before exploring these personal implications, the broader behavioral effects of spatial ghosts should be examined. Their past and present natures, as established by Martin, co-exist, pervasive but invisible, immaterial carriers of the beliefs pilgrims enacted within the Scriptorium. In the *Practice of Everyday Life*, de Certeau suggests that after the ephemeral consumer objects and the spaces we daily inhabit pass what remains are the actions these objects and spaces have catalyzed.⁸¹ The Scriptorium visualizes this process for pilgrims. Its recreations of historical architecture and the few remaining biblical artifacts from each corresponding period ask visitors' faith to override potential skepticism regarding the attraction's authenticity and to embrace the spirit of the Christian histories and rituals, textual and physical, presented in each room; it recreates de Certeau's ghostly objects and spaces. The Protestant nostalgia for a less secular genealogy of printing technology seemingly drove the attraction's construction.⁸² Yet, in its

⁸⁰ Samworth, Herbert, Scott Holmgren, and Stu Kinniburgh, *A Guide to the Scriptorium* (Orlando, FL: Sola Scriptura, 2003). The former owners of Van Kampen Investments, which was acquired by Morgan Stanley in 1996, donated their extensive collection for 'educational' purposes. NB: This publication lacks page numbers, thus all subsequent citations will only include the publication's title.

⁸¹ de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 35. This interpretation comes from the following quote: "Only the effects (the quantity and locus of the consumed products) of these waves that flow everywhere remain perceptible...they circulate without being seen, discernible only through the objects that they move about and erode. The practices of consumption are the ghosts of the society that carries their name."

⁸² It should be noted that recent scholarship relating the built environment to the printing press, especially Mario Capro's *The Alphabet and the Algorithm* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011) and *Architecture in the Age of the Printing Press* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), constructs an ambiguous relationship to faith. Capro touches upon how late medieval monks and nuns *produced* texts but not *why* and *how they experienced* producing and reading them, thus subsuming them under an economic paradigm they partially resisted. Moreover, his emphatic belief that Leon Battista Alberti catalyzed this revolution rings false and undercuts the role of Martin Luther, among others, who spread vernacular copies of the Bible. If anything, the Scriptorium, despite its biases, debunks such secular theories about the printing press' early history.

spatial divisions, the Scriptorium reflects Walt Disney World rides like the Haunted Mansion, bearers of secular rather than faith-based magic.⁸³ Their typological similarity permitted me to bridge the gap between my disavowed faith in order to move through the museum and understand how *all* postmodern architecture contains ghosts of our lost historical and religious heritage, material and immaterial.

A preoccupation with text and history provides another connection between the radical Protestantism promoted by the Scriptorium and how the West has constructed its past. Marvin Rosenthal and the Van Kampens did not know the Holy Land would transfer hands four years after the attraction opened. In spite of TBN largely rewriting the park's agenda and the function of many pre-existing buildings, the Scriptorium still speaks for the Holy Land Experience's earlier corporate history. Its re-organizes the writing and reproduction of the Bible in a manner that permits the extremist position of its founders to persist. A historiographical rather than purely imitative historical space, the Scriptorium actively portrays exegesis, and its subsequent re-interpretation, as factual.⁸⁴

With these specters in mind, this chapter will highlight my spatial ghosts in an attempt to understand the relation between subjectivity, spaces of the recent past, and why the Holy Land Experience so easily seduce pilgrims. I aim to demonstrate how, through rewriting the Bible's printed history in space and on a DVD produced by Zion's Hope, the Scriptorium blends earlier spatial and religious means of acquiring knowledge with those encouraged by postwar American culture. During this period, the built environment's primary metaphorical referent shifted from text to cinema and television. Much like one writes, reads, or even watches a performance in relative solitude--silent, surrounded but in

⁸³ The evening after my first tour of the Scriptorium I went to this Magic Kingdom ride, whose people movers carry tourists through individual rooms that draw their narratives from Gothic and Victorian haunted house novels. The Dutch Gothic Revival facade, consisting of faux brick, and the ride's interior both use materials that did not exist in the period they replicate.

⁸⁴ Cf. *The Scriptorium: The Story of the Bible*. Throughout the Scriptorium's accompanying DVD, produced by Zion's Hope, the talking heads relate their interpretations to the formal, factual history of printing technology and further employ extensive structural and architectural metaphors (i.e., the Bible as the historical foundation and form of the Christian faith). This reconstructive act re-arranges historical facts and documents rather than simply situating them in an chronology: they build their own house (historiography).

one's head--I walked through the Scriptorium unaccompanied, the attraction empty. Productive parallels here emerged between the writing of history, cinematic techniques, and the movement through space. As one walks through the Scriptorium, concealed truths about the Bible's production and interpretation gradually reveal themselves. One's initial skepticism regarding such an ideologically charged attraction dissolves and creates new questions concerning the construction and reconstruction of faith. On the other hand, the ghost tropes articulated by Martin and de Certeau partially unravel in the face of my lived experiences.

Martin makes a productive if generalized statement that devalues context. The ghost of American evangelicals' political hegemony today looms large over red states, but this waning faith and rising secularism does not correspond to Europe reeling after the Third Reich. de Certeau's central concerns, the reading and writing of culture, remain more prescient given the textual history recounted by the Scriptorium. He also subsumes television, a divergent technological innovation, and moving through urban space under this paradigm. Reading remains one means of viewing, but both the book and the written word have been increasingly questioned as the virtual, embodied in projected and digitized images found on screens, far more efficiently disseminates culture. Built environments, at the same time, continue to operate like palimpsests, recording individual movements only to have others write over, and deviate from, these actions in major or minor ways. As much as text allows one to imagine sight, sound, smell, and taste, the virtual tries to create these senses; both media do, however, rely upon prescribed narrative paths.⁸⁵

Sensory control builds upon narrative manipulation and typifies postwar American architecture, suggesting its deviation from the longstanding analogy between text and building. Immersive environments,

⁸⁵ Nash, Richard, "What is the Business of Literature?" *The Virginia Quarterly Review* (Spring 2013), accessed March 22, 2013, <http://www.vqronline.org/articles/2013/spring/nash-business-literature/?src=longreads>. This article productively discusses the relationship between the book and film, video games, television, and other more recent media, teasing out the different narrative strategies used by each. Nash draws a strong parallel between the narrative control inherent to film and literature. Nash claims the virtual's more totalized visualization forces viewers, readers, into making more literal inferences about content.

from movie theaters to office parks, became so pervasive that users were almost immediately oblivious to their effects. Their ingenious character lies in their deception: users feel that predetermined phenomenological experiences empower them more than a text, which usually lacks multiple perceptual characteristics. Reading the Scriptorium as exegesis undercuts the soundscapes and visual engineering inherent to its reconstruction of history and, in text's inability to provide pilgrims with comparable environments, demonstrates that historiography should be considered a multisensory rather than purely visual (textual, architectural) enterprise. The relative authenticity of visitors' experiences hinges upon their individual subjectivity. The Scriptorium insists upon a singular, white Protestant history enacted through filmic architectural techniques and offers well-versed pilgrims the opportunity to rewrite their own interpretations and those of their religious leaders. Historians must double as photojournalists in such historiographical corporate spaces, recording these environments in order to create a primary source and to assert their historical value.

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Having grown up going to theme parks, especially the Magic Kingdom--with my grandmother (fig. 6), for my mother's favorite annual Christmas parade, for my parents' twenty-fifth wedding anniversary--I am attuned to their behavioral effects. Moods rise and fall based upon lines, the ready availability of food and drink, and the climate. Endless books like *The New Religious Image of Urban America: The Shopping Mall as Ceremonial Center* undercut the everyday meanings created in similar themed spaces by making reductive, sweeping claims about heavily trafficked consumer spaces like Disney while overlooking simple details such as how the lack of bathrooms drives toddlers to accidents and mothers to exhaustion.



Figure 6: My grandmother and I at the Magic Kingdom, waiting in line at Pirates of the Caribbean (author's photo, 1994)

We should ask ourselves why we are so ready to malign the shopping malls, arenas, sport stadiums, office parks, movie theaters, restaurants, hotels, and tourist destinations in which we spend the majority of our lives. (We overlook their details, as citizens and scholars, because we want to oppose the capitalist machine and in doing so overlook its byproducts--the contemporary, the low, the cheap, and the popular.) We should further consider why and how these structures represent a nameless position when compared to canonical buildings today museified, toured rather than lived in. Religious and spiritual narratives often occur in historically significant or natural settings, within grand churches or among high trees. As mass produced materials became the norm over the past fifty years, spaces of devotion have taken on what some argue to be the replaceable, mundane style of American corporate architecture.⁸⁶ Aesthetic familiarity conceals this architecture's goal of control. Churches, like corporations, have professional and social hierarchies and often perpetuate conservative values that undergird particular political agendas.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Martin, *The Organizational Complex*, 6 and 54. While the skyscraper emerged in late nineteenth-century Chicago, it only later employed entirely glass facades. Cinema was invented around the same time as 'cities under one roof,' but it took several formal leaps (from no sound to sound, from black and white to color) for a self-consciousness about cinema as a representation of reality to actualize. Here, Martin ties the seamlessness of glass curtain wall architecture to the increasingly flattened, or cohesive, post-war American culture industry.

⁸⁷ Summit Church, a megachurch in Orlando, Florida, is located in a former AMC movie theater, explicitly linking the

I haphazardly grew up in two churches whose ideologies rather than formal structures reflected this homogenizing landscape and whose internal cultures made me more than skeptical of organized religion. My parents placed me at the same elementary school my father attended, Riverside Presbyterian Day School. It abuts a church with the same name and was founded in 1965. Our guidance counselor, dressed as a fairy, blessed ‘graduating’ sixth graders as R. Kelly’s “I Believe I Can Fly” played overhead.

⁸⁸ Performative does not begin to describe this environment in which *Veggie Tales* was anathema for the word of God and *Clueless* a harbinger of Satan. St. John’s Cathedral, a congregation incorporated into the Episcopalian hierarchy in 1951, was the second, and last, Christian environment I frequented. My parents here exposed me to weekly churchgoing so I could choose whether or not I believed in God; they did not, but felt it was my decision. They selected the First Communion year for this experience. Not only was I baptized after my tenth birthday, but my teacher, the mother of two boys on my neighborhood soccer team, had an affair with my best friend’s father. Neither church exemplifies ‘high’ religious style. Both imitate elements from similar European buildings in an unoriginal manner. Yet even unaware of these facts, acquisitions of cultural capital, I began to associate oak pews, stained glass work, veined marble sinks (baptism pools), and faux-gold organ tubes with dishonesty. Theirs was a historic patina, an architecture mimetic of a geographically and temporally disjunctive past. The Holy Land Experience and its Jerusalem functions similarly. It harnesses and revises history for contemporary purposes, to cohere a community using a past neither belonging to nor shared by its many users. The inward looking cultures of believers found in these three environments gesture at behaviors cultivated by postmodern architectonics. While the ghosts of history are formally present, their meanings are rewritten as individual behaviors alter and deviate from precedent.

With my faith shattered, I turned to more literal ghosts in horror films, Universal Studios’ annual

two typologies.

⁸⁸ After several scandals involving R. Kelly, urine, and underage girls, this ritual has evolved into a splendid example of irony.

Halloween Horror Nights, and the local shopping mall, the Avenues. The self-referential suburban dystopia of the *Scream* trilogy, the first seven *Halloween* films, and a slew of forgotten thrillers like *The Mothman Prophecies* and *Don't Say a Word*, all experienced in Cinemark, AMC, and Regal Theaters with friends my mother had chosen for me, filled God's void. Sometimes, after these forced pre-teen movie dates, she would take me to the Avenues, its central, two-storey fountain atrium where I sat in Santa and the Easter Bunny's lap. I later passed through this space on my way from Abercrombie to Gap, sometimes peering into the Disney Store, already nostalgic for a time lost. I only recall spaces in which purchases were made and entertainment passively absorbed. These experiences situate my understanding of religion and spaces of consumption, concepts I have long bound together in the churches of Buffy, Liz Lemon, and other prime time heroines that I watched as avidly as my Christian friends attended church.⁸⁹

I chose to study the Holy Land precisely because of my skepticism. I sought an understanding of faith's mechanics. Armed with years of secular indulgences, I read the park as, quite plainly, a lie. How and why should these spaces contain fewer deceptions than the religious enclosures of my childhood? And why did the park aim to blur the line between the secular and religious uses of my beloved postmodernism? My ethnographic goals, in part to upend such assumptions and to discover some naive kernel of truth, here bind personal history with the discipline of architectural history. It only helped matters that I had driven past this park many times and bemoaned its insidious effects with friends and family.

I care about junkspaces, a category to which the Holy Land valorously belongs, because they are the only spaces in which I have deeply felt. They house my personal ghosts. The light, neutral tones of daytime malls, empty and brown at night, versus the gaudy neon marquees, crowns, of movie theaters at

⁸⁹ Taussig, Michael, "Viscerality, Faith, and Skepticism: Another Theory of Magic," in *Magic and Modernity: Interfaces of Revelation and Concealment*, ed. Birgit Meyer and Peter Pels (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 272-273. This essay establishes a triangulation between faith, skepticism, and viscerality: faith is bolstered by both and, taken as a triad, they create a sense of the magical. The paradigm Taussig describes may also be used to discuss secular magic, or the faith consumers or individuals have in events and objects unrelated to religious beliefs. Such a triangulation occurs among Holy Land visitors.

night time: the suburban counterpart to urban high rises and entertainment zones that place users in environmentally-controlled, immersive environments.⁹⁰ These spaces neutralize sound in their cavernous interiors, stores pumping air conditioning for ten hours and one hundred patrons, movies playing all day to twenty viewers after which minimum wage employees toss out piles of stale, uneaten popcorn. Christianity dapples this landscape, its consumer culture visible in the local grocery store and on smartphone applications, its halls of worship as empty as movie theaters. Walt Disney World and other sites of late capitalist self-pleasure represent the secular appropriation of religious magic: they require users to have faith in what they present and to confirm this faith through a combination of healthy skepticism (CGI is not real, is it?) and viscosity (walking from your car to *Avatar* demonstrates an effort that seeks a reward, entertainment). The Holy Land Experience incorporates many characteristics of postmodernism in order to seamlessly integrate itself into the recent past's landscape and visual language. The park's goals create tension with its surroundings because its creators hope to re-insert the seeds of religious magic into a secular playground.

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The Scriptorium's rewriting of history blends the historical relationship between book and building with the more recent connection between cinema and architecture. In *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831), Victor Hugo theorizes the former tension. He argues that the built environment most accurately reflected a given culture before the advent of the printing press because manuscript production provided endless reproductive errors and hinged upon the desire of commissioners whereas architects, in his mind, had slightly more autonomy. After the printing press emerged, architectural patrons maintained a comparatively larger hold over designers and builders while one could much more freely write and print. Henri Labrouste, a mid-nineteenth century French architect, designed Paris' Bibliothèque

⁹⁰ These neutral tones run throughout the Holy Land Experience, almost spray painted onto the many concrete and plaster facades, while a giant crown rests atop the stage located in its primary performance arena, the Church of All Nations.

Sainte-Geneviève (1838-1850) with this relationship in mind. The building's facade reads like its contents, a series of open books containing the names of significant authors that are housed within it. The interior no less valorizes the history leading up to and following the printed word's emergence. It contains murals depicting ancient Greek and Renaissance thinkers whose works have been handed down through text and whose names are incised on the exterior.⁹¹ Unlike Hugo, Labrouste sees these two cultural forms as equal: he references the production of knowledge before and after the first printing press and within an iron and steel structure, concomitantly celebrating material, architectural and textual innovations. Hugo's deterministic statement "*Ceci tuera cela*" (this will kill that, i.e. the book will kill the building) unravels in the face of Labrouste's analogy, which associates multiple cultural forms with progress.

Both nineteenth-century Frenchmen notably situate their arguments in narratives. Hugo employs the titular Gothic cathedral as not only the primary setting of but also the central metaphor of his book, while Labrouste leads visitors through the library's first floor with the aforementioned murals and up a flight of stairs before entering the second-story reading room. In the latter, the movement through space even constructs a genealogy of the printed word. These architectural narratives share primarily historical referents, religious and historical ghosts looming over the surrounding urban landscape.⁹² They inculcate behavioral commitments that persist long after visitors leave, the grandiosity of Notre-Dame to faith and the library to knowledge.

Although the library represents a secular typology, it clearly responds to its religious surroundings; it is adjacent to both the Parisian Panthéon, and, according to Labrouste, Notre-Dame.⁹³ Modern secular

⁹¹ Levine, Neil, "The Book and the Building: Hugo's Theory of Architecture and Labrouste's Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève," in *The Beaux-Arts: Nineteenth-Century French Architecture*, ed. Robin Middleton (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982), 139-173. Levine articulates many of the iconographical and material aims of Labrouste's building while also creating a productive tension between Hugo's text and Labrouste's building.

⁹² Although Martin's argument in *Utopia's Ghost* solely concerns postmodernism, his flattening of global architectural into a horizontal plane may be seen as a problem not only now but also in the past. Even if our culture is one of multi-national corporations in which Hilton Hotels may only be differentiated from one another by the local foods they serve, it seems context should always be relevant. Here, the library responds to a nearby building, not, for example, to a French colonial church.

⁹³ The Panthéon was originally a church, but, during the French revolution, it was overturned and remodeled as a

architecture initially responded to and then overtook religious architecture as the primary locus of society, a process illustrated by this Parisian matrix. The history of the printed word--from its incipient religious functions through its secular political and educational uses--circulates between these buildings and demonstrates how similar styles may house divergent functions. By 2002, when the Scriptorium was nearing completion, religious architecture derived its forms from secular spaces and made meaning using the movement through space rather than conceiving of buildings as static metaphors, the tellers of a single story. A relationship between the Scriptorium and Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève's intentions seems feasible under this transition. The Scriptorium appropriates the library's spatial progression, which relays a secular history of print, to persuade pilgrims that Protestantism largely drove this technological innovation.

The Scriptorium harnesses not only its allusive facade (a Romanesque church) but also its themed interior spaces to demonstrate that built environments may alter the course of cultural production. The library in Alexandria, for example, is recreated before the medieval monastery to demonstrate how and why the Egyptians stored much of our classical heritage that was later reproduced in illuminated manuscripts. Only following the printing press, the tour argues, was scripture more widely circulated, translated into various vernaculars rather than only available in Latin, and interpreted by non-clerical authorities. This populist attitude may be found on Labrouste's facade, which suggests knowledge should be accessible to all. The Scriptorium elides the increasingly secular nature of education visible in the largely scientific and humanistic names listed on the library, demonstrating the constant historical revisions made by contemporary Protestants to promote their values.

After illustrating the emergence of manuscript production--when buildings like Labrouste's slowly began to supercede those like Hugo's cathedral--the tour leaves continental Europe for the English-speaking world. It never returns, belying the Holy Land's nationalistic impulse and arguing for the

monument to the people. This transition demonstrates the movement towards the secular and away from the religious.

supremacy of a Protestant interpretation of the Bible.⁹⁴ The Scriptorium carefully selects historical responses to the Bible, the primary source reframed throughout the attraction. Zion's Hope seemingly intended for architecture to function with equal importance as the lessons derived from these texts. The design firm ITEC, in collaboration with Marvin Rosenthal and the park's board, wanted visitors to progress through interiors that correlate to the historic architectural enclosures in which these books were produced. If a more purely textual goal was their aim, then a theater playing a film with similar content would have sufficed. The phenomenological experience of historiography--in which pilgrims well-versed in the Moral Majority and other Christian groups' readings of biblical history are visually and acoustically asked to re-examine a foundational text through historical and contemporary secondary sources--instead encourages pilgrims to move through an argument mentally *and* physically. This doubled rather than singular process further convinces visitors the argument on display is similar if not identical to their understanding of a Christian master narrative received in their respective churches, on Christian talk radio, and elsewhere. The Scriptorium hopes that each pilgrim engages in this historiographical act and resurrects particular moments in the Bible's reproductive history as well as their favorite Christian entertainments to more viscerally understand their own faith to be in line with evangelical creed. Its immersive bent perhaps stems from the growing Protestant and non-denominational investment in community service. The laity is moving beyond static, seated positions in pews and into the larger urban fabric to enact beliefs.⁹⁵

The attraction further relates to Labrouste's library because it claims to function as a rare book museum, using literary history as a didactic tool, but, more importantly, because it employs contemporaneous materials to house its story. The iron trusses of the library and the plaster columns,

⁹⁴ In focussing on English and American figures, the Scriptorium constructs an Anglo-American genealogy of the printing press that explicitly leads to organizations like Zion's Hope and TBN.

⁹⁵ Thumma, Scott, "The Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory: The Megachurch in Modern American Society" (Ph.D. diss, Emory University, 1996), 524. Thumma stresses that, since the 1990s, non-denominational megachurches have increasingly focused on community outreach and volunteer programs.

walls, seats, and figures in the museum actively remind the buildings' users that they are engaging with history in the present day. On the other hand, the iron of Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève that celebrates nineteenth-century French technological achievements culminates in the relatively static act of reading whereas the Scriptorium's postmodern fabric functions like a film set. It harnesses the theory of successive vistas, or storyboards, and continuously pushes pilgrims forward and thus gestures at the cinematic logic undergirding postwar American architecture. As mass media spread, television, film, and, eventually, the internet became primary disseminators of popular culture and the written word, in addition to more traditional art forms, were increasingly mediated through these technologies if not considered elite.

Eero Saarinen, whose aesthetically rigorous office park of the 1950s and early 1960s established typological and material precedents for American corporate architecture found at the Holy Land Experience, best articulated the sensorial impact of this paradigm shift. His notion of "memory vision" tied users' movement through built environments to cinematic techniques that altered how individuals experienced and processed the visual field.⁹⁶ The Scriptorium's effectiveness hinges upon cuts between different settings, narratives, and characters while tying them together through an omnipresent narrator heard overhead. The primary goal of the attraction may be manipulating viewers into believing that they write their own interpretations of textual history, but historiography here can no longer function as a solely textual enterprise. "Memory vision" harnesses sedimented visual and auditory patterns, but, instead of using filmic strategies on a passive audience, inserts visitors into a dynamic environment. When compared with text, film operates on more sensorial levels, using color, sound, scent, and, in 3 and 4D films, numerous visual planes.⁹⁷ The comparative viscosity of film presents a more persuasive argument than

⁹⁶ Martin, *The Organizational Complex*, 152. Also see Martin's note 66 on page 270. Martin ties Saarinen's claims to contemporaneous studies by architects, artists, and scientists who increasingly connected physiology to the mediascape.

⁹⁷ 3D films experienced their first heyday in the Great Depression and reemerged in the late 2000s. 4D films exist in a far more limited fashion, usually at theme parks, and, when in your local cinema, rely upon scratch and sniff cards, thus also incorporating touch.

text to both skeptics and believers. While one could argue that buildings such as Labrouste's employ similar narrative and visual logics as the Scriptorium, users were not pre-conditioned to experience space in this manner until cinema became a mass media like print was in the nineteenth century. This, film, did not so much replace that, text, as architecture's primary referent, as Hugo analogously argued in his *Hunchback*, so much as it built upon the accomplishments of both. Textual and filmic ghosts suffuse the Scriptorium, their influences unspoken, but their widespread availability enables the attraction to easily convince users of its arguments.

Walking through the Scriptorium as an architectural historian, ethnographer, and enthusiast of film enabled me to understand the building's historiographical intentions as well as its manipulation of mass media. Its use of cinematic techniques demonstrates the re-appropriation of a secular magic--a technology of the modern marketplace that many people consume but few functionally comprehend--for religious ends. The faith that I have in film partially undid my skepticism regarding the attraction's manipulative means of pushing visitors towards 'their own' historical interpretations. No, the apocalyptic, English-language bias of the attraction did not bring me closer to God, but it literally manifested how primary sources are reconstructed through the strategic organization of secondary sources and, more importantly, how the Moral Majority and its many derivative sects rendered top-down interpretations as individual revelations.



Figures 7 and 8 The clearest image, top, captured by both my Nikon and my iPhone in the Scriptorium,

revealing the degree to which lighting techniques were designed to prevent pirating ('documenting') the experience--in order to force visitors to buy accompanying DVDs, books, and postcards and, bottom, a postcard of the Scriptorium (author's photo, 2013; author's collection, 2013)

The Scriptorium employs lighting techniques that prohibit pilgrims, or anyone in favor of open source information, from documenting the space (fig. 7), which forced me to rely upon souvenirs to recreate my tours. Such a preoccupation with copyright haunts almost all corporate space: in a nearby Starbucks, I took several photos only to be scolded by a barista and then forced to delete them from my phone. No one in the park itself realized that I was using my iPhone to infringe upon their creations. As I walked through the Scriptorium alone and always hovered on the periphery of live performances, I feel the staff saw me as a loner. It seemed I was the only person to attend the park alone and, because of this outsider status, should not be approached in fear of being reminded of my compromised position. Few if any other tourists were visibly disobeying the rules set forth on trash cans, posters, and in staff announcements, forcing those interested in commemorating their visits to purchase postcards (fig. 8) and other visual ephemera to bring back their revelatory experiences. Using postcards becomes a means of understanding the pilgrims' experiential memory.

A DVD produced while the Holy Land was still under the leadership of Zion's Hope, and surprisingly still sold under TBN, actualizes many parallels explored above between film, text, and the built environment. Its clear bias against a postmodern interpretation of text and space defies the logic of the attraction, critiquing the persuasive tools it employs and laying bare the authoritative underbelly of evangelical Christianity. One of three 'biblical scholars' whose commentary constitutes the majority of the film makes explicit this issue:

the postmodern concept is 'entertain me, give me something that will capture my imagination.' And so we're into a drama, a springboard off of a text rather than expositing a text. And that tickles the ears of the modern generation⁹⁸

Although the DVD unfurls far more like a History Channel production, following a visible narrator through

⁹⁸ *The Scriptorium: The Story of the Bible*. See note 80.

a linear narrative told through re-enactments, the Scriptorium itself inserts pilgrims into the drama of the reproduction and interpretation of the Bible. It controls their movement so much that each successive room and its attendant voice-over narration remains dark and silent until the previous room completes its recorded performance. This mechanism not only captures the imagination by creating an aura of mystery but also literally “tickles the ears” of visitors. The DVD tells consumers that the attraction is other than it is and disempowers the historiographical movements intentionally constructed for pilgrims. A text, *A Guide to the Scriptorium*, also originally written under Zion’s Hope and later re-published by TBN, contains images as well as accompanying texts that describe the contents of all fourteen rooms.⁹⁹ In detailing a few facts and the contents of the Scriptorium, it fosters the sort of interpretation presented by the space and undercut by the DVD. The disjunction between these two documents divulges how re-writing history presents endless counter narratives even under heavily monitored corporate oversight. In the guide, readers follow a conventional history of the written word and text from Mesopotamia through Babylon, Egypt, Byzantium, and medieval scriptorium before deviating into a valorization of oppressed Protestants, while in the video viewers are exposed to peripheral Zionist exegesis.

A preoccupation with translation and then interpretation hovers over the remaining rooms and delineates an evolution towards the megachurch and celebrity status many recent pastors, including the Crouches, have reached. Sacrifice haunts these spaces and gestures back to the figure of Christ, himself a martyr. These correlations are implicit as one is rushed through the oppression of numerous Protestant authors and evangelists; constant movement prevents pilgrims from considering the attraction’s hyperbolic analogy. The first such figure, John Wyclif, is described as Gutenberg’s predecessor for translating the Bible into the English vernacular. Pilgrims listen to an animatronic Wyclif, who valorously describes his efforts, before his fireplace opens and he urges visitors to flee before English royal guards take him. The bookshop of William Tyndale, who translated the Bible from Greek into Hebrew and English, contains a

⁹⁹ *A Guide to the Scriptorium*.

copy of his Martyr's Bible, which has "blood stained pages--a graphic testimony of the price someone who was willing to pay for this copy of the Word of God."¹⁰⁰ John Bunyan's prison cell comes after the bookshop. The author of the second most purchased book ever, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Bunyan is the first historiographical figure in the Scriptorium and, for his behavioral interpretation of the Bible, was imprisoned for twelve years. Highlighting this sort of punishment makes current visitors thankful for the sacrifices of early Protestants made while also reminding them that not everyone embraces their beliefs. A room dedicated to the Mayflower connects these faith-based homesteaders to the tourists Zion's Hope intended to draw, those willing to move to Israel for their convictions. Many Protestants still actively oppose other ideologies--the American 'left' and its 'hedonistic' social agenda, less stringent Christian sects, Muslims, yogis, and so on--but, as a cohesive community granted religious freedom, the scene is intended to empower visitors through hindsight. Using spaces in which text is produced, purchased, and read aloud or in private also connects this Protestant narrative to the progression of western capitalism. As the number of books grew and spread, as sects whose identities were rooted in these diversifying and multiplying texts saw their numbers swell, printed words became markers of religious identity. Affording and displaying not only Bibles but also exegetic works demonstrated one's learnedness and commitment to a set of values.¹⁰¹ This proliferation and the corresponding self-promoting function of texts gradually pushed Protestantism towards the center of English and American societies.

A history of liberation coincides with the ghosts of waning Protestant oppression and demonstrates that, after sacrifice, God rewards the faithful. William Tyndale did not spill blood in vain and his and other similar texts made the Protestant cause public. The Metropolitan Tabernacle of Charles Spurgeon, a late

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ See note 42. In *The Protestant Ethic*, Weber emphasizes how asceticism--the accumulation rather spending of capital, here objects or texts, led to the Protestant acquisition of wealth. If members of Protestant denominations wrote, printed, and sold such texts but did not spend money on more wasteful goods, then they not only profited from these texts but also from the ascetic attitude towards expenditure promoted within such secondary religious sources (152).

nineteenth-century London-based preacher and public intellectual whose sermons were published in English and American newspapers, provides a scenographic view into the popular evangelism that emerged. The guide asserts this connection by claiming “Spurgeon’s sermons remain as popular today as they were more than a hundred years ago,” implicitly comparing Spurgeon’s plain rhetorical style to persuasive recent figures like Jerry Falwell, Billy Graham, and even the Crouches. The micro-architectural Tabernacle suggests that a postmodern interpretive leap is required of the faithful because, if one was to read the environment literally, it would only foster skepticism. By this point, pilgrims are likely to have become so viscerally engaged in their tours that the Tabernacle provides them with a relatively empty canvas onto which they can project their own historical interpretations. The Spurgeon room also provides an analogue to the more recent relationship between megachurches and movie theaters, employing one-point perspective to suggest the performance of text corresponds to this ‘liberated’ Protestantism.

Just as the proliferation of printed words begot social visibility and status, religious texts’ increasingly sensorial and personal content drove American Protestants out of churches and into the market and frontier where they sought to infuse productivity with creed.¹⁰² A “prairie church” from the nineteenth-century American west demonstrates this trend--the acquisition of seemingly endless land providing such opportunity--and exemplifies that “it took a special commitment and determined spirit to spread the Word of God across such an open expanse.”¹⁰³ This claim elides two key evolutions in American Protestantism. For one, Protestants are figured as fearless, implicitly taking the moral high ground by slaughtering countless Native Americans and acquiring their lands. This statement ironically obscures violence done by Protestants despite previous rooms’ belaboring of that done unto them. The

¹⁰² See notes 42 and 89. In the *Protestant Ethic*, Weber directly observed that Protestants conceived of work as a “mechanism for the practice of asceticism” (143). The purpose of a moral, God-directed life was partially based upon a commitment to one’s professional calling. As Weber notes in “Protestant Sects,” however, the Protestantism that spread throughout the United States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was increasingly secularized. The denomination one belonged to did not so much matter as the socio-economic standing conveyed by one’s given congregation, whose name served as a badge of “credit-worthiness” (188-190).

¹⁰³ *A Guide to the Scriptorium*.

growing bond between Protestant sects and socio-economic power also fails to appear despite the fact that the Holy Land Experience exemplifies the apotheosis of this corporate power structure. Narrative manipulation characterizes the entire attraction, but it becomes more and more insidious as its designers refuse to admit the ideological costs of denominational success.

Intentional elisions of history outside of Protestantism's evolution are also reflected in the other spaces the Scriptorium replicates. In only two rooms, the initial atrium with an illuminated neon view of Mesopotamia's mountains and the Mayflower, is nature even visible from within architectural enclosures. An inward looking historiography, which relies solely upon Protestant textual interpretations to construct a phenomenological celebration of itself, serves as the foundation for these groups' recent sway over the American political system and exemplifies how the reconstruction of historical events' meanings may justify destructive, or divisive, behaviors outside of churches. TBN seemingly detected these implications and, while it did not alter the Scriptorium, the park's tone has shifted away from radical evangelism towards a generalized celebration of a Christian God. As I walked through the empty Scriptorium with the corporate transfer in mind, it became apparent that the attraction did not appeal to the majority of the park's current visitors. Not only was experiencing historical documents seemingly less valuable because TBN populated the Holy Land with far more diverting song-dance-and-script-based performances, but the evolution illustrated within the Scriptorium has less and less merit as our culture becomes increasingly preoccupied with entertainment rather than historical knowledge or activism grounded in the facts and interpretations on display there.¹⁰⁴ The attraction reveals how historians and ethnographers should think about the corporate (here, TBN) acquisition of local (Zion's Hope) spaces. The particular historical

¹⁰⁴ To extend the relationship between historical environments and film, recent movie musicals like *Les Misérables* and *Chicago* situate their characters in vacuums. The former employs soot-covered environments that riff on mid-nineteenth-century French streetscapes and could only be interpreted as sets. In an attempt to partially conceal such inaccuracies, the camera spends the majority of the film locked on famous singing faces. The latter spends the majority of its running time with equally familiar celebrities writhing on a black stage rather than in its supposed setting, 1920s America. Historical accuracy is undercut by the postmodern desire for efficient thrills.

narratives, texts, and styles established to respond to a context are flattened out or forgotten in favor of a streamlined, ever-present corporate vision. These latter spaces are typified by constantly renewing their attractions. They erase the sedimented experience of users within a space in addition to traces of the histories, textual and physical, that initially inspired constructing such built environments. Corporations regenerate in order to evade consumer boredom and to conceal reminders of their missteps. History is often for these conglomerates something better forgotten and re-written many years later.

A remnant of the recent past, the Scriptorium building functions as a ghost. When I visited, a velvet rope bounded off an extensive waiting area, the sort of labyrinthian back-and-forth, railed lines that you would find brimming with tourists at the Magic Kingdom. One wonders where the bodies once occupying this interstitial space went and to what degree the park, and especially this attraction, was always a voided space. This reception gestures towards what seems to be the populist belief that the writing and re-scripting of history serves less and less purpose as cinematic and virtual perspectives provide a more digestible means of learning about the past. Enacting a filmic historiography has even become an outmoded task; the way in which audiences experience film has become increasingly passive as the medium has aged and the visual exploration of successive narrative spaces assumed rather than revelatory. Cinema gained a patina and lost its claim to visceral representation far quicker than text. The Scriptorium derives its techniques from both media, its structural logic thus less engaging than intended.

The Scriptorium curiously undermines its function as a museum in its themed spatial distribution and forcing of pilgrims along a predetermined rather than exploratory path. Alcoves in which performances occur are highlighted, their lights rising and falling to gain visitors' attention, while cases holding the 'rare manuscripts' sit to the side, continuously but dully lit. Its biblical interpretations thus rely upon the multi-sensory movement through space rather than a careful observation of historical documents. Surely this arrangement was intended not only to educate but also to excite. As a non-believer, I remained amusingly bored until the 'Finale.' Velvet curtains covering portraits of biblical prophets, separated by

plaster columns, rise according to their historical position in the Bible until, finally, a rocky outcropping appears in the ceiling. From here, God's voice decrees the Ten Commandments, made visible by red neon lights that appear in the rock, and, then, a cross illuminated from above celebrates the apotheosis of the 'ride.'

This revelatory, transhistorical space encourages visitors to passively observe and contrasts the active construction of history within the preceding spaces. It places God and Christian prophets at the top of an interpretive hierarchy below which the figures included within the Scriptorium's twelve preceding rooms conduct their interpretive acts. Contemporary pilgrims rest at the bottom of this religious social structure and, as much as the site encourages their ability to re-read and re-write history, they also exist in an increasingly virtualized, sinful world that taints their ability to conduct these actions; figures like John Bunyan are situated as though they produced their work in vacuums, separated from the immoral miasma of their surroundings. The Renaissance had carnivals, the eighteenth century coffee shops, and the nineteenth century soot-filled alleys with prostitutes and gamblers. While the Scriptorium privileges individual genius derived from God's word, it critiques the immediate past as to exclude late twentieth-century evangelical figures whose ideologies undergird the attraction's interpretations.

A 'postscript' depicts a twenty-first-century living room with a television set and numerous other technological distractions. The overhead voice warns visitors that our world brims with diversions that prevent even the faithful from actualizing Christian morals let alone re-interpreting them into a legible verbal and architectural language. Rather than trying to reconceive of these recent technologies as productive, the Scriptorium takes a critical, even aggressive, stance against them. Not only the fear of apocalypse, the primary motive that drove Zion's Hope to construct the park, but also anxiety concerning the dwindling number of new evangelicals leads to this conclusion. While John Wyclif, for example, triumphed under an oppressive government, the Moral Majority and its various descendents, like pastor Ted Haggard's Colorado-based ministry, gained power by attaching themselves to government initiatives.

¹⁰⁵ Protestant interpretations thrived during times of oppression and even during later centuries when it empowered the faithful. But evangelical sects have begun to furnish subsets of the American population with an oppositional rhetoric that places them against less conservative and more diverse populations, ironically employing the same punitive tactics inflicted upon their predecessors. The Orlando metropolitan area typifies the movement away from primarily white, middle class Christians and towards a more hybrid conception of American social and religious identities. The final room's name, postscript, implies paranoia concerning the gradual decline of organizations that had widespread support from the 1970s through the 2000s: technology is only one of many incipient threats to the entirely white, Euro-American Protestant narrative presented within the Scriptorium.

The attraction reflects the ghost of evangelical Protestantism's past successes. Ideological constructs waged against non-white and liberal populations render denominations still asserting such creed dated and partially make pilgrims' historiographical re-interpretations of historical 'facts' that led to these beliefs invalid or even moot. Ironically, and against the intentions of Zion's Hope, the Scriptorium now encourages the Holy Land Experience's more diverse pilgrims to engage in a critical rather than passive historiographical act, interpreting not only the Bible but also the secondary sources upon which it is based as biased and partially inaccurate. The relative emptiness of the attraction, on the other hand, demonstrates that the literally textual, so pivotal to Falwell and other recent evangelical figures, has fallen out of favor just like its proponents.¹⁰⁶ The experiential and emotive has effectively replaced this paradigm. Visceral enactments of faith provoked skepticism among postwar urban and suburban evangelicals: snake handling sects, like those depicted in *Holy Ghost People*, moved American evangelical culture towards scriptural interpretation.¹⁰⁷ Yet now the Bible and its attendant faith-based values are re-presented as

¹⁰⁵ Clark, Victoria, *Allies for Armageddon: The Rise of Christian Zionism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 164, 171, 200, 207-9, 241, 267, and 285. Clark conducted ethnographic research, shadowing Haggard for several days well before a 2007 scandal in which the pastor was revealed to be gay.

¹⁰⁶ See note 19.

¹⁰⁷ *Holy Ghost People*, website (<http://archive.org/details/HolyGhostPeople>), directed by Peter Adair (1967; available

entertainment rather than risk. The Scriptorium blends the recent textual past of American Protestantism with the return of faith asserted through interactivity rather than the passive reception of biblical interpretation. Corporate control of religious image-making further connects the two paradigms and suggests that, in America, religion functions as a business as much as anything else.

The Scriptorium's final space epitomizes the church as an economic rather than religious locus. A gift shop, also depicted on the last page of the attraction's text, actualizes and advances the Weberian critique of American Protestantism. Over a century ago, upon visiting the United States by train, Weber concluded that membership to a given sect was based not upon belief but rather upon advancing one's credit relations. He saw that economics superseded faith. The constant flux of the Holy Land Experience, never meeting projected attendance numbers, always altering performances, and imitating well-worn architectural styles and tropes, demonstrates that, decades later, religion has been appropriated by the American economy, one part of a diversifying fiscal landscape that makes every identity a salable commodity. While this reading proves a valid point regarding Protestant history, it also results from my inability to observe other users of the Scriptorium and to create an archive of their experiences. Zion's Hope no longer controls the park at large and thus it becomes harder yet to see how pilgrims responded to the owner's intentions. The absence of documentation during the park's first phase necessitates a recording of the Holy Land Experience under TBN. Ghosts require archives to sustain themselves, to continue creating memories, and to become ingrained within cultural memory.

in the public domain). This film depicts a sect of snake charmers in rural West Virginia who writhe, overtaken by God, as they hold snakes. When they are bitten, it is taken as a sign of God punishing their sinfulness. Such depictions of rural evangelical behavior likely frightened middle class suburbanites and made convincing the comparatively stayed but equally manipulative rhetoric of Falwell and the puppet shows and musical performances of Tammy Faye Bakker.

Chapter 3_The Drama of the Archive: Historicizing Corporate Evangelical Architecture

Corporate copyright issues preoccupy TBN far more than they did Zion's Hope and, like the Disney Corporation, TBN maneuvers visitors to follow rules that forbid deviant behavior. Mark Pinsky, the former *Orlando Sentinel* religion reporter, informed me that, under its first owners, the park welcomed him into its various attractions, encouraged him to take his own perspectives on their content, and even permitted him to interview staff members as well as the park's owner.¹⁰⁸ TBN's desire to maintain a global public image and to sustain its larger corporate structure prevented the park's continued transparency.

Progressing towards the examination of my experiences, this chapter emphasizes how an expanded definition of 'archive' may lead (architectural) historians to understand why pilgrims, and I, value the Holy Land Experience's recreation of history. This method has far broader goals and, through

¹⁰⁸ See note 38, concerning the work of Joan Branham and Annabel Jane Wharton. Theme park expert Scott Lukas, in his *Theme Park* (2008), also claims research at the park went smoothly.

my micro-history, suggests the disciplinary value of new research tools. Ethnographic chance characterizes my descriptive and analytical processes: as I observed the enaction of biblical narratives and visitors' relations to them, I became increasingly convinced that subjectivity, and the first person, should enter historical discourse. I looked around at my fellow tourists and witnessed history entering the minds of non-academics through practical (performative) means. Participant observation enables historians to see how their concerns are perceived both within and outside of the academy. History became seductive to myself and other patrons *because* it was depicted simply, passionately, unfettered by Raymond Williams and others' 'keywords' as well as other hallmarks of academic self-consciousness.¹⁰⁹ In order to understand how and why this site matters to pilgrims, I had to become one. Just as importantly, I had to document my experience of the TBN park to create the cultural memory that does not exist for its Zion's Hope iteration.

To justify the park's relevance to historians and a broader academic audience, I will describe and problematize my own archive as I walk readers through the park's consecutive built environments and the performances they contain. This journey culminates in the Church of All Nations, where the passion play, the day's apotheosis, occurs. The chapter concludes with a discussion of TBN's regional corporate headquarters, which sits immediately adjacent to the site, and, given its heavily guarded nature, will be explored in relation to office parks and corporate campuses that have sprung up in American suburbs since the postwar period.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Williams, Raymond, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). Williams defines a bunch of keywords for cultural theorists. A neat late high school read.



Figure 9: architectural theorist and historian Beatriz Colomina (Getty, 2009)

My active engagement with a new sort of archive is intended to challenge architectural historian and theorist Beatriz Colomina's longstanding definition of a progressive archive (fig. 9).¹¹⁰ She claims historians must make efforts to research figures and sites that have both extensive *and* minimal (textual and physical) archives with an emphasis on the latter. Her argument hinges upon the comparison of two early European modernist architects, Le Corbusier and Adolf Loos. Whereas Corbusier collected everything down to napkins and phone bills, Loos consciously destroyed documents. A comparative abundance of Corbusier scholarship resulted from these decisions. Sure, we should find a way around these sorts of problematics, but her essay falters on two fronts that render her definition of archive

¹¹⁰ Colomina, Beatriz, "Archive," in *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), 1-15. Colomina's subtitle clearly states her position--she all but demeans the pulpy quality of mass media by associating it with the white, rectilinear style of modernist architects. Cf. Benjamin, Walter, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999). Benjamin attempted to construct a fragmented but inclusive history that relies heavily upon varied and extensive means of researching in and thinking about archives. This effort in part inspires my work here, though, again, I do not want to push my conclusions towards the sorts of Marxist readings that Benjamin, it is rumored, was forced towards because he was working off of a stipend Theodor Adorno gave him.

conservative. Not only should we look beyond architects, sites, and their paper trails to find research topics and to frame serious theoretical and historical questions, but we should, more importantly, expand our definition of the archive to consider more tangential or peripheral objects and documents related to architectural topics. Colomina champions two canonical architects, making the question of experientially examining these archives' contents moot as they have, for the most part, been written about and do not push her archival work towards unasked topical and methodological questions. She also wrote on the verge of the internet boom, so we cannot scold her failure to realize its potential. YouTube, Flickr, and Facebook, not to mention keyword searches of most news websites and Google Books' extensive catalog, have since emerged and enable greater efficiency and precision in collecting disparate visual and textual sources. I do, however, insist that recording space using photography and video cameras was, even in 1994, a viable yet ignored position. This chapter will extensively display my archive, an experiential one reliant upon photographic and filmic documentation to demonstrate how and why we must move beyond the sort of binary Colomina discusses and many historians continue to employ.¹¹¹ While my archival emphasis grew out of TBN's complete refusal to aid my research process (as you will see, they literally chased me off of their corporate campus), such documentation should at least supplement more conventional research methods.¹¹² The findings populate, and complicate, the Orlando landscape and

¹¹¹ My understanding of photography and film as an experiential archive stems directly from Michael Taussig's *Mimesis and Alterity*. There are admittedly disjunctions between the colonial concerns that drive this book and my inward looking American evangelical history. But his understanding of these mediums contains two key points that led me to understand my archival process as one of sensorial revelation and interpersonal contact. The first he derives from Walter Benjamin, whose definition of mimesis the entire book riffs upon. Taussig sees "the two layered character of mimesis" as consisting of "copying, and the visceral quality of the percept uniting the viewer with the viewed" (24). I similarly view the construction of my archive as a means of copying in order to recall, and partially replicate, my relation with other Holy Land pilgrims. The second point extends further, unraveling our ocularcentrism like architect-theorist Pallasmaa suggests and a stance indicated by the section's title, "Where Action Puts Forth Its Own Image": "a first step here is to insist on breaking away from the tyranny of the visual notion of image...the senses cross over and translate into each other. You feel redness. You see music. Thus nonvisual imagery may evoke visual means...To emphasize the 'nonvisual' here is to emphasize the bodily impact of imaging, to the point where Contact is displaced from its Frazerian [reductively, modernist anthropological] context to become the term required for conveying the physiognomic effect of imagery" (57-8). The archive is internalized and then experienced through all senses and in tandem with other pilgrims. No wonder I often found myself lost throughout the day, fluctuating between an awareness of my recording and an equal, if not greater, forgetfulness.

¹¹² Recall figures 1 and 2 from the introduction, which illustrate the e-mails I received warning me against attempting

provide contemporaneous behavioral analogues to my historical experiences in postmodern spaces including the Scriptorium.

*

As discussed in chapters one and two, the Holy Land Experience and other theme parks normalize their ideological intentions by using the logic of cinema, a standard viewing mechanism in postwar America. Each new visual environment further and further immerses pilgrims in a narrative to persuade them that whatever is depicted (here, biblical history) is closer to reality than to representation. The abundance of emotionally stirring historical structures seems to convince tourists they are traveling along optional rather than predetermined and intertwining pathways. The three dimensional, tactile, and olfactory elements present throughout the Holy Land build upon filmic characteristics of sight and sound and contribute to this process. While the Scriptorium contains only artifacts, historically evocative spaces, and a few animatronic figures, much of the remainder of the park uses corporeal forms, costumed human bodies, to bolster this process. The Holy Land Experience leads pilgrims through the story of Christ's life with detours that provide greater historical insight and more contemporary forms of entertainment. The former attractions, like the Scriptorium and a model of first-century Jerusalem, were constructed by Zion's Hope, while postmodern performances were implemented by TBN.

After driving through the Holy Land Experience's gates, which sit across from a gas station and low rise office buildings, I parked my car. Outside of its formal boundaries I found the Garden of Eden. It consists of large, plastic animals, several pools painted blue, astroturf, and palm trees. This well-maintained material landscape could be found on cul-de-sacs just miles away and eases pilgrims into the visual language of the park. One could read such an environment as tawdry in comparison to spaces in more elaborate theme parks, like the Magic Kingdom, or more elite corporate architecture, like the Seagram Building, the GM Technical Center, or an upscale mall. Yet tourists wandered among these scenes with

to document the Holy Land Experience. It should be self-evident that no formal interviews were conducted with staff members or TBN corporate employees.

their cameras, transfixed by lions and small fountains, not comparing or judging, just experiencing. An opportune location to take pictures before the family grows weary over the day's course, the Garden, an Old Testament narrative, is cleverly situated outside of the park. This intentional placement establishes the the Holy Land's primary narrative goals.

An animatronic manger scene continuously plays directly across from the entrance, which hybridizes several of Jerusalem's city gates.¹¹³ Out of all the historical figures associated with the Nativity, only Mary moves, her arms opening and closing as if praying, her mechanical character laid bare by the stilted nature of this action. In a video, an Asian American boy runs in and out of the diorama, clueless of its contents as his parents tape it for future viewings. They have yet to read the numerous copyright warnings fronting and running throughout the park. Once the family saw that I was taking video and pictures of them, they became self-conscious and quickly moved on without addressing me. Capturing each performance within the park as framed by the bodies of tourists was characterized by a similarly bifurcated experience: at the same time as I was drawn into the narratives depicted, most individuals and groups became aware of and moved away from my lenses. There is something authentic to this response especially in an era saturated in reality television where everyone seeks fame. Religious devotion seemed something everyday believers did not want recorded, their ephemeral experience intended to remain just that rather than part of a public archive. TBN taps into and promotes this impulse.

¹¹³ The park map claims that the entrance is modeled off of the Damascus and Jaffa gates of Jerusalem.



Figure 10: a picture of me with one of the Holy Land's employees, clad in period costume (author's photo, 2013)

The gates themselves contain further traces of modern technology with turnstiles that gauge the number of pilgrims entering and exiting the park. I asked one polyester-clad employee how many people he saw daily use these machines. He stared back at me and smiled. Through the gates, I entered the Jerusalem Street Market, a place where pilgrims take pictures (fig. 10) with 'cast members' and are given the first of eight options to buy souvenirs and food. The sun shone above and, while the early January mornings I visited the park were certainly not the peak of tourist season, everything from the marketplace forward contained, at most, ten to thirty other pilgrims.¹¹⁴ Recording absence, consumers' willing or passive neglect of the Holy Land, became an unexpected but important task. It was clear that if attendance was this low the park may not survive for much longer, making my documentation more prescient. These empty spaces also gestured at larger shifts in regional and national religious demographics. What if we were to lose the Holy Land Experience like we lost Loos' drawings? Why should we long for sections of the Austrian modernists' department stores while not worrying over a

¹¹⁴ See note 73. This observation leads me to suspect that attendance has declined since 2010, the last reported date these statistics were recorded.

plastic re-creation of Jonah floating in the whale's belly, soon to torn down and replaced by a gas station? (And we should also worry about gas stations, especially those whose chains are folding.) Such spaces and the experiences they house contain a far richer archive of the recent past than ephemera. They should be preserved through both documentation and active use for future generations to understand the codependent nature of America's historical religious, economic, social, political, and architectural landscapes.

At the coffee shop off of the street market, I bought a double shot espresso. The African American woman working here, the friendliest employee I encountered all day, was worried what the caffeine would do to my heart. She told me she had worked at the park since its 2001 opening and, after TBN took over, she had been volleyed from position to position and was eventually placed in a service job because, she felt, the park did not find her a historically accurate representation of first-century Jerusalem's population. Yet around a third of the pilgrims seemed to be African Americans and, in many cases, these clusters of middle-aged women and their mothers seemed more readily moved to tears than their white and Hispanic counterparts. The disjunction between the park's anticipated and actual audiences could be one possible explanation for its relative emptiness.



Figure 11: the Smile of a Child portion of the park, featuring a cardboard cutout of current owner Jan Crouch (author's photo, 2013)

The street market splits in two directions towards either the Smile of a Child Adventure Land or several micro-architectural performance spaces surrounding a retention pond. Both betray the postmodern character of the park. Within this play area, I found a small rock climbing wall, metal recreations of Roman soldiers, plastic camels, butterfly chairs, and cardboard cutouts of the park's owner, Jan Crouch (fig. 11), as well as an angel clad in jean shorts and a white t-shirt sitting atop a motorcycle. These objects juxtaposed the joyful if serious tone of performances throughout the rest of the the Holy Land and suggest that TBN remains confused about how to persuade younger generations to embrace televangelical culture. They lack faith that re-enacting historical biblical events will excite this demographic and, as a result, several musical shows set in contemporary settings and stressing Christian virtues are strung throughout the day. More literal representations front the pond, which contains two giant stone tablets listing the Ten

Commandments and waterwork shows at the beginning and end of the day. Not only does the relation between water and the Ten Commandments contradict how scripture depicted Moses receiving them through fire, but the waterworks also obscure the very values the park advocates throughout the day and thus undercuts these morals' worth for largely secular entertainment purposes. The Last Supper chamber, one of the performance spaces around the lake, reveals how TBN more seriously depicts biblical content for family audiences.

To see the Last Supper, I walked through a faux-rocky outcropping into a chamber with plaster walls, painted as if made of stone. A maiden, dressed similarly to my earlier barista in a purple and gold cotton, handed me bread and grape juice. The show occurs every fifteen minutes for the entire day. Its rapid pace of repetition renders history something temporally calculable, expendable, and more commodifiable than many of the park's other productions. If one may constantly access an event, then it may lose its luster to pilgrims. This effect became apparent as I waited for the performance to begin: everyone sat on their phones. Perhaps this devaluation of the Last Supper is intentional. Communion, granted here, implicitly belongs in a church not a branded corporate environment and situating this event within a performance rather than in a stand alone service further demonstrates how theming may unintentionally undermine Christian traditions. This sort of interpretation reveals contradictions in the Holy Land's presentation of biblical history. The enaction of stories and songs is emphasized over traditional means of mediating the individual relationship to God. Biblical performances rather than rituals are foregrounded because they are less likely to be experienced elsewhere. The Holy Land becomes an unconventional but nonetheless historically significant site in part because of these machinations.

Before Jesus emerged from his hidden chambers--and the park has had to employ two Christs so the Last Supper can repeat itself--pilgrims are reminded by *Christ's voice overhead* to put away their iPhones and to refrain from recording the sacred event. Despite the park's underplaying the liturgical significance of the communion, I received more glares for my attempts to photograph this event than

anywhere else in the park. Every pilgrim bowed their heads and closed their eyes, meditating through copyright warnings and the subsequent liturgy as if these cautions were themselves part of public worship. Such foreboding announcements may also be read as the byproducts of corporate paranoia. I instead consider them as archival roadblocks, resistances to the recording of history. Colomina suggests this logic's pervasiveness in her description of Adolf Loos and it is not shocking that TBN and the park want to conceal its pre-packaged, live-action Bible from documentation to enhance its viscosity. Discussing Colomina fails us here because textual archives are one step removed from experiential archives: objects and texts found in traditional archives contain and depict reflections upon events, recalled from and partially created in the mind; they rarely record incidents as they occur in real time. The latter archival process permits one to more clearly discover details that string histories of the immediate past together. Formal characteristics that reinforce historical narratives, for example, and corroborate their realism may be easily discovered. In the the Last Supper, the table and Jesus' garments use the same velvet and cotton materials and the same gold, off-white, and blue throughout the room. Such visual cues run throughout the park. Jesus wears blue, park employees beige and purple. While I could argue that this logic constructs a reductive history, differentiating 'every day' citizens of Jerusalem from significant biblical figures, it highlights the content that pilgrims seek in the park and makes history digestible and thus arguably more effective.

The Sermon on the Mount performance, located on the opposite side of the pond as the Last Supper, occurs immediately after the morning prayer service. Staff members actively herd pilgrims between these scheduled events, distracting pilgrims from their surroundings, which are discontinuous with the day's narrative progression. Employees not only manipulate visitors' historical perceptions but they also partially controlled how I could make my archive. When enclosed by fellow tourists, it became difficult to remove myself and catalog the sorts of spaces, rather than corporeal performances, that make the Holy Land's histories at once evocative and discontinuous. Even the 'experiential archive' relies upon

partial reconstruction from memory, relating events and forms uncaptured to those recorded. A black iron fence topped by golden prongs, beyond which lies a half-empty parking lot, rest adjacent to the pathway Christ progresses along as he delivers the Sermon. Partial glimpses of these details may be found in my videos, but I am also heavily relying upon recollection: half-empty and gold pronged are, for all intensive purposes, fabricated to embellish an overall image of the park. Here it is not Christ but other performers warning against copyright infringement, again framing the entire experience through a protective corporate lens.

The only spaces unburdened by such warnings are the gift shops. Pilgrims roam free in these loci of consumption that sell objects from Bibles to toga-and-cross clad stuffed bears. Only former Zion's Hope attractions receive souvenirs explicitly related to their content, once more underscoring TBN's devaluation of more straight historical content in favor of catchy but intangible performances, which are, gift shop employees told many tourists, unrecorded on salable CD, DVD, or even digital platforms. This unavailability, and the accompanying presumption that pilgrims' faith should extend to not breaking copyright law, suggests that TBN interprets its spectacles as analogous to and of equal importance as sacred events recorded in the Bible. T-shirts, other clothing, and jewelry bearing the Holy Land Experience and TBN logos serve as abstract markers of religiosity and revelation, just like golden cross necklaces, and further emphasize the experiential importance of the park and its place in memory rather than on record. I did not have to conceal the many photos I took within the Shofar Shop, the park's largest gift store. The only question I was asked was if I needed any assistance finding a particular item. Several times I inquired if they had certain random, trademarked objects. A pen: yes. A snow globe: no, it never snows in Florida (or Jerusalem?). Christian guidebooks: yes. Underwear: a confused no. Archiving this sort of ephemera, buying, storing, and eventually donating it, is a task almost as underexecuted as creating the more 'experiential' archive I am describing. It is also rare in comparison to the archiving of magazines, postcards, other paper products and even high fashion items, all rarities in their own right but randomly

prioritized over other objects and methods. We should try to expand our definition of what is worthy to be archived for we do not know what will prove useful in the future. For contemporary scholarship, or histories of the recent past, such items reveal not only the consumption patterns corporations anticipate--here, nothing sexy, only practical reminders of one's faith--but also, if viewed in tandem with sales figures, how consumers retain and mediate their memories by acquiring particular possessions.

Upon exiting the Shofar Shop, I entered the semi-circular portico leading to the Church of All Nations. This building uses classical architectural motifs in a hyperbolic manner that rivals Palazzo del Te, Italian Mannerist Giulio Romano's masterwork. By far the gaudiest component of the park, the Church is fronted by a baptism pool. Its facade consists of elements derived but deviating from classicism, including triangular pediments, alternating Corinthian pilasters and columns in addition to cornices projecting out from a white, stucco-covered concrete. Along the entrance portico, I found several tourists reclining on volute-shaped chairs. The playful, postmodern reinterpretation of classical forms illustrated here reaches its peak inside the Church, where more blatantly modern materials and construction methods synthesize the ancient amphitheater typology with that of the American megachurch.¹¹⁵ With its columnar benches, TBN implicitly acknowledges, much more than the Magic Kingdom where every 'rest area' forces visitors to buy goods, that its pilgrims need breaks. Christ did not experience the New Testament in a day, so pilgrims are not held to this expectation either.

If the other attractions at the Holy Land concealed the park's televangelical ownership, the Church of All Nations possesses the lavish TBN aesthetic. Air conditioning, even on a mild Florida January afternoon, hit me several feet before entering the Church's two story lobby, whose walls are

¹¹⁵ Cf. Gumbrecht, Hans Ulrich, "'Lost in Focused Intensity': Spectacular Sports and Strategies of Re-enchantment," in *The Re-Enchantment of the World: Secular Magic in a Rational Age*, 149-156. This article discusses the symbolic aspects of sports stadiums in modern Western culture, emphasizing that their cores are often empty, how audiences viscerally respond to athletes, and how collectives may internalize and experience actions occurring, and being performed, in front of them as one mass. The implications for megachurch attendees, a religious counterpart to this secular discussion, are numerous.

entirely covered by mirrors . Small, rectangular, prefabricated reflective surfaces force pilgrims to acknowledge themselves. This room and its abutting hallway, which contains small paintings depicting each of the Ten Commandments on the way to restrooms and a circular chapel with an angel statue, relate to Frederic Jameson's conception of postmodernism as a hall, as well as a facade, of mirrors.¹¹⁶ Along these halls, everything remains a reflection of reality rather than reality itself, but for most human subjects this difference is indistinguishable. Jameson had been dancing in my head since the previous July; his remarks could not have been farther away as I started taking photos of the space oblivious to other pilgrims filtering in and out of the auditorium to use the restrooms. I was transfixed, even sat down in the small chapel until a persnickety 'cast member' snapped me out of my daze: "Please stop taking photographs and proceed to the auditorium. You are not allowed to take pictures, and the show is starting in fifteen minutes. We like our visitors to be settled before the show begins." I had not been so allured by the park since the morning prayer service, another intensely postmodern religious experience in which contemporary music was used to draw pilgrims into the remainder of the day's more conventionally historical content. In both moments, I lost myself while constructing an archive despite mediating my experience through camera lenses, also mirrors, also objects like plaster and plastic biblical figures strewn throughout the park. The only way to recall details of such immersive experiences is to record the environments and events that provoke particular emotions, more accurate than one's memory, postcards, transcribed interviews, or even receipts. I was told that recording was not allowed because it distracted performers and took pilgrims out of the moment crafted especially for them.

Free association, a cognitive faculty enabled by the lack of folders and other dividing elements that constitute formal archives, brought me back to Palazzo del Te. As I sat staring up at the chapel ceiling

¹¹⁶ Jameson, 37-45. Jameson and the interior decoration on display gesture, quite convincingly, at the recent past. *Postmodernism's* discussion of the Westin Bonaventure Hotel reveals the material (reflective), representational, and always mobile characteristics of the postmodern. This constant movement, in turn, enables postmodern images, performances, and built environments to convince their users and viewers of their reality because people pass them by so quickly.

before I was interrupted, I recalled this sixteenth-century home. A ceiling fresco in its *Sala dei Giganti* came to mind, its overt chaos like the paths I had traveled to this serene, postmodern reflective zone.¹¹⁷ I have returned to this painting in articles and on the internet many times. These virtual encounters met with my hyperreal corporeal experience to create new meaning. My eyes, when looking at the fresco, move back and forth between the violence and strife of earth towards an equally combative zone of deities, all of whom point towards a central battle rather than admitting their own complicity. A coffered dome interior tops the maddening crowd under which several serene, minute onlookers stare down at the mayhem below. Who are our pilgrims, who am I, and where is the corporation? I realized that I was toiling below, making an archive along with fellow historians, on the interstate, looking from a distance, and, in spite of my best efforts, somewhat oblivious to the pilgrims who were the observers of a divine struggle rather than engaged with earthly concerns. Above all of us were a few passive figureheads, obscured and ensconced in the kind of sumptuous materiality that the Church of All Nations strove for. All I wanted was to ascend to this third tier and to understand its obscured corporate logic as I stared up at my own reflection, as I projected a memorized image onto a clear ceiling. Somehow my mind had been conditioned, over the course of the day, to see the past in these present enclosures; the Holy Land Experience encourages each of its pilgrims to use their own emotional, memory-based archives to relate to its historical representations, to normalize the surreal. This is where the historians' project cannot fully go for

¹¹⁷ Cf. Friedman, Alice, "Modern Architecture for the 'American Century': Eero Saarinen and the Art of Corporate Image-Making," in *American Glamour and the Evolution of Modern Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 109-147. Friedman's article discusses the origins of aestheticized American corporate architecture that began with Saarinen and led to the Holy Land Experience, but Friedman also led me to an important citation. In note 17 of her chapter, she references mid-century Italian architect and theorist Bruno Zevi, who critiques Saarinen's postwar American architecture as analogous to the sixteenth-century Mannerist movement. This relationship implies that, like those architects and artists who emerged in the wake of the great Michelangelo, postwar corporate modernists threw themselves into the escape from reality: discontent and boredom followed the great Corbusier and Mies. I find that these relationships, between Mannerism, corporate architecture, and postmodernism, create productive historical analogies not only because of Zevi's claims and their genealogical implications but also because strange or uncanny architectures will always have their critics. I think Zevi created a great analogy whose frown I want to turn upside down. I saw the Palazzo del Te, and Saarinen, in the Church of All Nations because, while all three could be critiqued for their cynical harnessing of capital to actualize fantastical forms, these precedents bear a similarly melodramatic aesthetics.

there are no means of fully collecting abstractions, and this is where the cultural logic of postmodernism subverts reality by saturating our minds with images and providing blank slates onto which we can project and, then, confuse these images with the real.

While the Church contains performances throughout the day, the passion play that caps the day off fills (half of) the auditorium with pilgrims. I walked past many of my companions as I tried to find a seat from which I could record portions of the play unnoticed. In my first two positions, I drew scolding remarks from neighbors: lower rung cast members, including an over zealous sixty-something British woman who snipped at me throughout the day, trotted around the ground level seating area waving signs that instructed us against copyright infringement. The vigilant pilgrims sought to reinforce this message. By this point, I had seen more warnings than crosses and was unphased and, sitting alone, I managed to capture two videos. Filling one's iPhone to its full capacity on consecutive days revealed itself as a pratfall of constructing a digital archive, an unintentionally Loosian move and rendered my passion play archive limited.

Jan Crouch is actually in both short videos of this performance. She stands to the far left of the stage, wearing all white and gold, even a long fur vest, her bottle blonde hair in a beehive. Half-heartedly waving her hands in the air, she embodies the specter of TBN, more omnipresent than Christ himself, her gooey sweet words at the show's conclusion an afterthought, something the pilgrims overlooked because the preceding performance moves them to tears.¹¹⁸ The audience's stasis implies the system of successive vistas that so effectively works at Disneyland and other theme parks does not function as well at the Holy Land where the day is capped off by immobility. This logic ties the park to film more closely than its themed typological precedents. Passively receiving a narrative as if listening to a sermon in their respective megachurches, the closest pilgrims come to participating in the play is jumping from their seats,

¹¹⁸ Jan Crouch's hands in the air provide a productive, inauthentic analog to the performative, sculptural worship I observed during morning prayer.

waving their hands in the air, and singing along, an effort only visible in the front row. Most of the patrons sat as if in front of and placated by a television or film screen.

An early musical number, “Joy to the World,” exemplifies the bookends the passion play uses to frame Christ’s life and death. These tangential songs, along with the dialogue, are pre-recorded, pushing the imitative architecture and re-enactment of biblical stories to another, more abstract level of mimesis. The senses performed literally separate from one another, sound removed and visual motion immediate, yet the pilgrims do not notice, so enraptured by the overriding lyrics that profess “Jesus has come to bring joy.” The costumes consist of the same polyester, gold, white, and purple fabrics and ornaments seen throughout the day, but onstage they possess an especially flamboyant quality. The song itself rises and falls along with lights and the stage curtain. None of these descriptive and analytical observations elucidate much about the performance itself. Instead they reveal the degree of its effectiveness, how much the show manages to move pilgrims in spite of the postmodern pastiche onstage. There is no cynicism or irony present, only the hope for a direct connection to the life of Christ, its historical legacy resonant two thousand years later, not a rhetorical, political, or other device to these pilgrims, simply a past worth accessing.

As a re-presentation of facts, the Holy Land employs the Bible as an archive from which it reconstructs textual images through a visceral, contemporaneous lens. This tradition has its own genealogy beginning with Tammy Faye Bakker, who rose to national prominence with her husband, Jim, by performing simple Christian songs on national television. But the patina of tax evasion, of drug abuse, and of other personal scandals and the Crouch’s involvement with many similar issues that led to the decline of the Bakkers may not be seen onstage.¹¹⁹ The separation between Christian history’s depiction and present day events furnishes the Holy Land Experience with a means of escaping its interpretive and corporate

¹¹⁹ Cf. *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*, DVD, dir. Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato (2000; Santa Monica, CA: Lionsgate, 2001). This film casts Tammy Faye as a victim. The most haunting scene shows her dancing around the pristine but abandoned Heritage USA.

contradictions. As archival footage, this first video recorded scene demonstrates the degree to which ‘history’ may be manipulated but nonetheless remain firmly rooted in the past. Its unclear division between biblical narratives and contemporary entertainment forms actualizes the innocent hope of its pilgrims, a hope for bettering the world through Christian values gleaned from a historical religious text. The video’s shoddy condition reflects the degree to which subverting this optimistic paradigm (as a writer-pilgrim forced into recording the ephemeral transcendence offered by such performances to later praise them) is necessary to create cultural memory. These tensions, between the authentic and the archival, place the researcher in a challenging liminal position: I was more often than not distracted by the process of recording and can thus only primarily attest to witnessing the experience of others mediated through lenses instead of immersing myself completely within the park. Ironically, only the Scriptorium, where I was alone but unable to record, provided such an experience. Such a gap also occurs in traditional archival research as one tries to relate to historical figures or events through biased documents. The primary difference here is that the historian (that’s me) constructs *and* interprets sources.

A short video of the crucifixion reveals similar archival problems and illustrates how theatrical techniques and postmodern aesthetics shift throughout the passion play and TBN’s Holy Land. Both videos demonstrate how TBN waters down and commercializes history. By the point that actors wheel the wooden cross onstage, Christ’s death seems beyond the point. No musical number occurs and, while this decision connotes the scene’s serious tone, it also becomes apparent that the Church of All Nations is better suited for garish, bubblegum pop celebrations of Christian salvation. I found the scene dull, its clunky dialogue (“Let’s show the king some *Roman* hospitality”) more apparent than in previous scenes. The Holy Land Experience here protects its pilgrims from the cruel facts of history, the violence inflicted upon Christ obscured by a malevolent, pre-recorded laugh, closer to the narrator of the Magic Kingdom’s Haunted Mansion than the voice of anyone onstage or in the Bible. Sound effects of a whip discontinuously play as a piece of rope is flailed in the direction of the actor playing Christ and, soon, a

gospel choir begins to harmonize above the pained groans. The spectacle could only refrain from using song for so long; it seems to be the park's most effective means of enacting Christ's levity.¹²⁰ The Holy Land, early in the day, establishes theatrical distancing techniques--constant reminders of copyright infringement, materials displaying the disjunction between past and present, and randomly placed musical numbers--as a way to both bind pilgrims to and separate them from history. By making pilgrims self-conscious, TBN forces visitors to commit to its means of presenting historical narratives. While some of these aesthetic elements may not register, the obsessive control over the use and cataloging of space creates a tense environment, close to the paranoid, post-9/11 conservative mind. The park relies upon historical representation, architectural and non-, to provide catharsis, to assure its pilgrims of a brighter Christian tomorrow through emphasizing what may be seen in the rearview mirror.

Archiving and discussing pivotal moments like the passion play proved less compelling than the unexpected revelations of the everyday I stumbled upon, where song enclosed myself and every other pilgrim in the light of day or I found myself somewhere discontinuous with the park's overarching narrative. A more ontological, perceptual history emerges from the humdrum rather than the grand, the found rather than the sought out. Not only was my distance from 'history' palpable in the Church of All Nations, framed in a scenographic landscape lacking architectural or natural elements, but my seat, on the far right side of the auditorium, permitted me to see backstage. I assume most pilgrims on either side could also see the mechanics of the passion play. Few seemed, like me, as concerned about these reveals let alone the sorts of visual inconsistencies made apparent by them, yet few, beyond the active front row, betrayed any sense of being moved by the performance. Unlike the morning prayer service, the Sermon on the Mount, or even the Last Supper, the passion play read as incomplete. And then I came back to the

¹²⁰ Cf. LaBelle, Brandon, *Site Specific Sound* (New York: DAP 2004). LaBelle, an electronic musician and installation artist, wrote this short pamphlet in conjunction with several Los Angeles exhibitions from 1998 to 2002. In it, he highlights how sound activates built environments and creates dynamic relationships between users and space. His theorizations point to the effectiveness of sound as experientially connecting disparate individuals and elements

notion of a hall of mirrors, which concealed reality through representation or even muddled the two to an indecipherable degree. I do not think what I archived until the day's final performance embodies this theory, even find the interior entryway too literal a replication to embody it. As I watched Jan Crouch and examined the middle class audience and the carpeting and the plaster, I no longer saw revelation, just a hollow megachurch with a semi-circular fresco above the auditorium's seats. The painting contained architectural masterworks from primarily western countries and gestured at the heterogenous togetherness TBN sought to create through their passion play production and in their new building.

I saw a hall of mirrors: TBN poured money into this project to represent beliefs they were not convinced of themselves. They invested in the least historical, least interactive portion of the park to control pilgrims' viewing experiences at the day's conclusion and to advertise (as Jan would do) TBN at the end of the 'play.' The cynicism that grew in me during the passion play made me want to argue that the final, experiential product of the park cloaks contemporary problematics in history.

Sure, my archive now tells me, but look closer. I was at a distance from other pilgrims unlike during previous performances and this was the root of my distaste because it was was my fellow pilgrims that convinced me most of the park's authenticity. The Church of All Nations rang false because it is, quite literally, the postwar American megachurch fronted by historical architectural languages. One could wager a similar claim about theme parks, but they remain intimately bound up with the replication of history. The rest of the Holy Land elegantly integrates pilgrims into an effective first-century Jerusalem much like Main Street USA functions at the Disney parks. I could also argue that the Church of All Nations never existed in a previous iteration and thus further demonstrates its contemporaneous rather than historical intentions. But, no, these paths are easy and do not advance discourse.

Historicizing the megachurch represents the most moving and brilliant, if unintentional, moment in the entire park. The patrons witness the gradual death of a typology concomitantly with the death of Christ. My archive contains images of its flawed historical narratives--fresco as well as play--but more

importantly it illustrates a nearly empty space intended for three to four times as many pilgrims as those present. The Sunday morning worship service held here demonstrated a similar pattern: a thinning of expected attendees. But there are still men and women and children looking for grace in this world, every day and every week. It is perhaps only the price of admittance and airfare to Orlando that prevents more from coming. The park was not a hall of mirrors, and neither was the Church. Performative sermonizing and top-down interpretations of the Bible are losing dominance in favor of faith enacted through charity. This sort of Christian religiosity returns to the historical origins of the Bible, the sort of actions Jesus took and that led to the widespread adoption of the Christian faith. The genius of the Holy Land Experience is in its prediction of these changes before they spread after 2008 when the American economy faltered and corporate-style worship practices came into question. The park's presentation of history as the everyday brings Christian audiences closer to their own interpretive, experiential reckoning with the Bible and its contents. The Church of All Nations provides a productive final contrast to the histories presented throughout the day, gesturing at the conscious decision contemporary Christians must make between embracing the postmodern religiosity embodied by the megachurch or enacting the historicity of Christ.

The sort of Corbusian abundance, again following Colomina, of religious paraphernalia and the materials on display at the Holy Land Experience, ironically and along with almost every megachurch and their respective contents, are already being rendered expendable. As the number of visitors to the Holy Land declines, the need to record these spaces using an experiential archive becomes increasingly important. What museum will want to house anything within the park other than the Van Kampen collection? And why, other than the Scriptorium's contents, will the park remain undocumented?

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Two emergent narratives, one theoretical and the other formal, concerning suburban corporate offices explain the cultures from which both the Holy Land Experience and TBN's adjacent headquarters and their preoccupation with corporate oversight emerged. Given my absolute inability to access the

interiors of the TBN offices, we must partially return to cultural history to understand the proliferation of such spaces. Architectural historian Alice Friedman argues that the theoretical seeds of postwar corporate space stem from the architecture of Eero Saarinen. While the popular press critiqued Saarinen's work during his lifetime for aestheticizing the mundane, it has since been viewed as an exemplar of the space's experiential value. Neither structure owned by TBN would traditionally be conceived in relation to Saarinen, yet the park, an emblem of an American business venture, taps into many of Saarinen's ideological concerns. Saarinen sought to emphasize movement through, and the framing and sensorial experience of, his spaces. He associated each of these goals with the spiritual celebration of a building's context and rendered everyday business environments beautiful.¹²¹ The Holy Land Experience not only functions as a literal and figurative work environment, its cast aiming to satisfy pilgrims that pursue spiritual labor, but it also encourages these efforts through formal rigor, intentionally pushing tourists through new environments to reach a more perceptual understanding of the Bible. "Architecture must make a strong emotional impact on man," Saarinen claimed.¹²² His postwar modernism informed corporate themed spaces for the next sixty years. These architectures harnessed emotion to push users towards a (consumptive) catharsis rather than just placing them within severe, rectilinear, mass-produced forms. The effectiveness of the Holy Land hinges upon pilgrims' fervor for its built environments and performances, their willingness to look beyond its economic substructure and revel in spatial experience. Lavish TBN sets, televised analogues to the park itself and some of which are located next to the Holy Land, follow a similar rationale. They brim with paintings, windows, staircases, and ornate furniture, connoting the comfort concomitant with a life led following Christ's teachings. As corporate interiors more explicitly promoting a contemporary visual language than the park and whose grand, sumptuous style would likely not transfer to most viewers' living rooms, these spaces mediate the gap between touch and

¹²¹ Friedman, 111 and 114.

¹²² Saarinen, Alice, ed., *Eero Saarinen on His Work* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), 10. Cited in Friedman, note 7, page 112.

televisual images through dramatic songs and speeches that dynamically reach out to viewers. TBN taps into historical American corporate architectural aesthetics to construct meaning in their buildings as well as on their shows.

The evolution of postwar suburban company spaces demonstrates how Christian corporations--televangelists *and* individual congregations--rose to prominence not only virtually through television, but also, and more importantly, spatially. Megachurches colonized the American landscape along with little boxes (homes) and low rise office complexes. While the specialization of American jobs had occurred since the 1920s, it took on three particular, decentralized architectural forms after World War II. Managerial capitalism, which made a corporate hierarchy transparent, necessitated extra-urban development as it employed more individuals that performed specialized tasks. The corporate campus for middle management research and development, the corporate estate for upper level executives, and the office park, usually visible from adjacent thoroughfares and used by lower level employees, were the three typologies resulting from this growth.¹²³ A corporate estate, literally two Orlando-area homes, houses Jan Crouch when she occasionally visits her Holy Land Experience. The TBN headquarters, on the other hand, functions as a service station for preparing park attractions, a generative space for developing new ones, and a production facility for broadcasts seen unfit for the park's two equipped recording studios-cum-performance arenas. But TBN's Orlando offices blend the functional and economic motives undergirding the development of the corporate campus and the office park. The former models itself on the American university. The Holy Land Experience, according to its advertisements, functions as an edutainment space. Laid out in a rectilinear fashion, with loading docks rather than an internal courtyard containing grass or a fountain, the complex contains peripheral parking and larger landscaping elements pushed away from the buildings themselves. This use of the corporate campus model demonstrates TBN's desire for its educational goals, and those of the Holy Land Experience, to be taken seriously. It implies

¹²³ Mozingo, 1-17. For corporate campuses, see 45-99 and for office parks, see 149-193.

imaginative and intellectual thought and labor goes into the production of its spectacles, which are intended to move pilgrims towards informed revelation rather than just entertaining them.

The buildings do, however, hew closer to the office park template. They abut Interstate 4, invoking Robert Stern's Walt Disney World Casting Center. Both TBN and Disney situate their corporate production facilities next to this freeway to advertise not only their prosperity--the ready availability of jobs within--but also to remind passersby of the ease of accessing their particular themed spaces. Disney's building represents a more permanent investment, constructed by a starchitect to present High Taste. The TBN headquarters are comparatively Low, using the same concrete, plaster, and steel as the adjacent park but without formal frills or well-known names attached to it. The TBN buildings also correspond more to the speculative logic that motivates office park construction. Corporations tend to build these sites to house regional functions and positions that may or may not dry up, thus making common materials and no-name designers a top priority. Zoning and tax structures drove the proliferation of this typology. Lower suburban tax rates encouraged companies as well as families to move out of cities and to sprawl across the landscape rather than to build up on more expensive plots of land, especially for more uncertain business ventures. Municipal authorities offered malleable zoning laws to further encourage corporations to buy, and potentially repurpose, suburban land. Orlando boomed as a result of this process, its small inner city core forgettable as it stretched out horizontally to create new entertainment complexes and low rise residential structures that housed their new employees. Florida tax laws are especially loose, something that likely appealed to the Crouches. The state's equally ambiguous zoning regulations, whose floodgates opened with late 1960s legislation giving Disney free reign over its own county, make the park and its adjacent office's zoning functions easily manipulable; as a religious organization, the park pays almost no taxes.

These issues only gesture at my experience of TBN's office space, by far the most protected area of the Holy Land Experience. On my second day leaving the park, I noticed TBN signs next door.

The next day, exhausted from continual revelation within the Holy Land, I parked in another nearby office park and, with my cameras, made my way over to the TBN property. I assumed they would discover me immediately, a paranoia apparently well-deserved. A retention pond, a common ‘landscaping’ element in Sunbelt office parks used to prevent parking lots from flooding by collecting runoff, sat next to I-4. Standing under several oak trees behind this water, I took photos of the park’s public image. Two plastic and steel signs, a smaller one for TBN and larger one for the Holy Land Experience, were separated from the highway by a chainlink fence, the Church of All Nations towering above all three elements. During my visit, the viewing platform atop the park’s megachurch was closed for repairs, but on most clear days it seemed that pilgrims could climb to its top and see the flat, commercial landscape surrounding them: God’s dominion, an abundance of shopping and dining options. The regional corporate headquarters was one storey and combined white and beige concrete, the former smooth and the latter riveted vertically. In front of its entrance, a few nondescript SUVs sat below streetlamps that employed the same color scheme as the building. Brownish grass and half-dead trees frame the big box retail stores across the highway. The office complexes’ doors only permitted visitors entry by either key-card access or a buzzer system, though several gold-footed, silk-clad chairs were visible through sliding door windows.

Between the two rows of buildings sat large trash cans, loading docks, and TBN-labeled cars and golf carts. At the end of this vista I could see the ruddy, domed roof of the Scriptorium . The successive framing of spaces, the filmic device of storyboarding innovated by Disney Imagineers, worked even from the most unexpected angles, testifying to how the manipulation of space extends far beyond its intended radius. I began taking pictures of the what amounted to the Holy Land’s detritus before turning around and witnessing the Crucifixion cross’s construction . I realized why this space was not clearly labeled as adjacent to the park. The blurring between reality and history that daily occurs within the Holy Land would unravel for many if these machinations were made visible. It took two men to tie, hammer, and adjust the wooden beams of the cross, four pieces of wood including its rolling platform base and a small label. For a

while, or maybe just thirty seconds, I stared at them. Their actions enchanted me, lent the entire park an unanticipated secular glow: their mundane tasks transparently labor, not performing religion, using the same tools as construction men anywhere. There was beauty in this to me, the rationality of nails and wood taking on an air of wonder and mystery dissociated from Christ, coming from their commitment to producing an object in the moment. Or maybe I was just projecting some reading onto them, searching for how notions of “secular re-enchantment” intermingled with the clearly religious overtones of the park.¹²⁴ This moment, more immediately than my archival construction on previous days and unlike the ghosts of the Scriptorium or Orlando’s cultural history, corporealized what is at stake in recording and documenting copyrighted spaces: the autonomous individual’s perceptual faculties are increasingly co-opted and controlled by multinational conglomerates. We must archive this process in order to subvert its insidious intentions.

“What are you doing?” Someone was addressing me in a harsh, masculine tone. I had tried to avoid this sort of discussion by intentionally dressing ‘butch,’ which I overcompensated for by looking ‘ghetto,’ How could anyone address me, pick me out as ‘boy,’ a Southern catchphrase, or worse yet, ‘gay boy,’ while wearing a *Friday Night Lights* t-shirt from my boyfriend, an LA Lakers hat, gym shorts, and Nike kicks? There was a camera around my neck. This was a sign that something was clearly not right if they had read whatever thick handbook this park must dole out to new employees. It told these men: *do not let anyone record anything, or else*. For a second, I thought about telling him what it means to construct your own archive because corporate oversight makes it nearly impossible to write a history about such spaces. I had talked to the company lawyer and he was congenial enough. This tactic had already failed me at Whole Foods and Target, where I wasn’t on speaking terms with a lawyer,

¹²⁴ Landy, Joshua and Michael Saler, “Introduction: The Varieties of Modern Enchantment,” in *The Re-Enchantment of the World: Secular Magic in a Rational Age*, 1-14. This edited volume, and its introduction, posits, much against the sort of religious enchantment on display within the park but perhaps far more in line with contemporary Western if not global societies, that modernity filled the void left by the mysterious, redemptive, ordered, and wondrous world of religion with equally charged secular counterparts.

unprotected by a partially understanding, well-paid bureaucrat. So, I lied.

“I got lost?”

“Can I help you?”

“Oh, no, I am just confused, but I will leave now.” A mistake: I was hinting at my archive. How could I explain historiography? Perhaps there was a nice analogy with football games and the ensuing commentary by sports news anchors. My t-shirt could be an artifact corroborating my understanding of these matters. Historiography could be televisual, maybe, right? I also thought about trying to explain historiography through my shoes, but then I realized their soles were like palimpsests, related more to the Scriptorium than to expanding Colomina’s definition of the archive. They may have liked Colomina, her assured female academic hardlining misconstrued as a sexy, castigating teacher in a porn, or maybe that was also something only ironically amusing to me.

He jumped down from the loading dock. My archive would not be compromised. This was no Loosian venture. My camera bag held all of my receipts, all of my souvenirs, and some green tea bags. Corbusian? Overbian?

I started to run at a brisk pace as if in an action film, and I imagined this chase scene soundtracked by Nicki Minaj: “I’m the baddest bitch/ the mistress/ I’m the baddest bitch.”¹²⁵ I fell jumping over a drainage canal, mud splattering all over my leg, the polo-shirted TBN employee feet behind me. The ding-ding-ing of my rental car’s door opening came next, then the doors locking, followed by me driving off. Did Colomina jog to post-feminist power anthems and think about her archive disappearing in a fire, or did she hear about the fire starting in the middle of the night, jump out of bed, run there and then inside to gather as many pieces of paper as possible, her book project endangered, her---the polo shirt jumped in front of my car, almost flew on top of it. At this point, I had run out of historiographical metaphors.

¹²⁵ Nicki Minaj, “Baddest Bitch,” *Sucka Free*, 2008 by Dirty Money Records.

He started banging on my window.

“What are you doing? Where is your camera?”

“I told you, I was lost, sir.” Sir is always the clincher, the sort of word you use with authoritative masculine figures who don’t really want to hear about your emotions, your sentimental attachment to an archive that testifies to the sort of lived experiences, everyday revelations, that I witnessed within the park, that I felt as much in there as I had just now. He moved away from the car, his lips about to open. I sped off and went to the nearby megamall, the air conditioning and Muzak lulling me into comfortable daze before realizing I may have been placed on a persons of interest list by TBN. Did they have my picture? What if I needed to do further research?

Making an archive always involves risk. To admit that it takes more than opticism, the gathering, recollection, and application of material gained through sight, to reach an original conclusion seems a rarity. Maybe we touch pages or a keyboard or an object, but who writes about how these elements feel, or smell, or taste, or how all of this interacts to produce historical *and* contemporary emotions? Perhaps there is a way to enact this process without incorporating the historian’s subjectivity, but referencing Nicki Minaj, and *Friday Night Lights*, and Nike, and American sexual mores all construct the cultural landscape of the recent past, one that comes into tension with, and thus illuminates, the historical significance of the Holy Land Experience. Maybe this is what happens when there is no alternative archive, when the historian is pushed out into the wider world without a shred of paper to bolster their claims. But without subjectivity or multi-sensorial experiences, how would we even be able to choose between and find meaning in more traditional materials? The drama of the archive is endless.

Conclusion_Ranting and Raving towards Faith in the Everyday

There is still grace in the world. We may go on about the neoliberal, oil, the Bush administration, the Third Reich, Mao, the Catholic Church, murder, drugs, prostitution, informal cities, cancer, rape, poorly written literature, water bottles killing fish in the Pacific, racism, sexism, spending too much time in front of screens and not enough time outside, poverty, famine, AIDS, Mel Gibson, genocide, the Israel-Palestine conflict, the neglect of senior citizens, the abuse of laborers, credit cards, and on and on and on and on. Our world brims with cruelty, sadness, and loss.

But to not see grace would be to deny the other side of history, the side that makes living and thinking through injustices, first as citizens and then as historians, possible. Without our comfort, which enables us to come to grace far easier than most, where would texts like my own come from? Why should we not be grateful for and use this position to sympathetically understand our subjects, who are often in

situations and built environments far worse than the pilgrims I discuss?

We should arrive at an understanding of grace in order to make this comparison possible. Grace may be any one of the following: ornament, 'the part of a thing in which the beauty exists,' a tool that allows us to see beauty, something favoured by a population, one's fate as dictated by a higher (usually divine) power, permanent or temporary divine influence, a formal pardon, a person's name, an allegorical figure, or something in a Terrence Malick film.¹²⁶ Each of these definitions may be related to the Holy Land Experience, may allow us to see how history is represented and experienced here as a thing purposeful against conventional assumptions many would make about its stylistic and its ideological (religious and corporate) underpinnings.

Things in both the first and second lists above occur within and surround the built environment in and about which we think and write. The first set of concerns are inherently political and obscure, when overemphasized, our ability to clearly look. I am asking you to see how and why grace, not only aesthetically but also conceptually and experientially, matters as much if not more than crises, scandals, and injustices. In my mind, grace remains the only way out of nature and society's destructiveness. There is complexity *and* simplicity in this perspective, in examining the everyday and teasing out smaller rather than larger patterns.

The two lists above are also meant to demonstrate that there should be no singular readings of situations, people, and things just as there is no one definition of an archive. Rigid interpretations deny the multifarious realities we daily inhabit. A book I once based my entire career around, *The Villa as Hegemonic Architecture*, exemplifies the sort of single-minded 'political' thinking and writing that takes the approach I here bemoan.¹²⁷ I feel these stances are not only selfish but dull. As representations or

¹²⁶ "grace, n.," OED Online, accessed March 27, 2013, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/80373?rskey=v6h5Pz&result=1>.

¹²⁷ Bentmann, Reinhard and Michael Müller, *The Villa as Hegemonic Architecture*, translated by Tim Spence and David Craven (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1992). Heavily reliant upon the Frankfurt School, this book attempts to graft twentieth-century cultural theory (philosophy?) onto sixteenth-century Venetian architecture.

embodiments of tropes lifted from critical theory, the human subjects such authors problematize likely won't understand the discourses used to describe them. I am not sure I even do. While I am the first to admit that the paper preceding this conclusion does not rise to the standards I am now setting for myself and for others, I must exist within a discourse and obey its logic in order to prove my merit. This system is flawed but necessary in order to obtain grace (literally, following a definition not included above, to be granted a university degree). I have tried to partially demonstrate how a history may employ numerous points of view by moving from making historiographical claims towards enacting them. I have strolled through Orlando's cultural history, how the Holy Land Experience establishes its interpretive frameworks, and into an understanding of how experience may function historically by constituting multiple archives.

Relying upon one kind of archive, one conventionally housed in a vault, safe for the ages, does not allow us to take advantage of numerous other ways of reconceiving our world. We should construct our own physical and digital archives. Both processes should not only occur to furnish future arguments but also to expand a body of knowledge, to preserve in order to help future generations understand how and why their predecessors thought and acted in a certain manner. I see no reason why collecting and creating cannot coexist side by side as archival enterprises unless we want to limit ourselves to a historically proven method and to remain unduly suspicious of an underexplored one.

Then there is the question of how and why secondary sources should matter, why we continue responding to other scholarship and ferrying books and PDFs around with us every day. We do so in order to continue learning, not to close our minds to perspectives or disciplines but to wade through the muck of violence, pain, and bad writing to come out the other side and to see their inherent grace. And these secondary sources are connected to spaces, libraries and publishing houses and bookstores and computer manufacturers, as well as to people, librarians and editors and salespeople and software designers. People make history.

Personal historical experiences in the process of collecting secondary sources. Just now, the

librarian from whom I have been taking books for the past year stopped me. She told me that she liked me and then started talking about how her God has led her away from hate and regret about staying with her abusive husband, how treating her dog kindly and living simply matters most, and how in me she sees true kindness. The books I have been reading led to her to make assumptions, but are these conclusions not as interpretive and historical as the ones that I am making? Over time, she peered through the books I was ordering, thought about Gothic cathedrals and nineteenth-century drawings of Jerusalem, and approached me to share her revelations. Our lives intertwined around the writing and reading of broader, less personal histories; every human mind functions, at least in part, using a historical lens. Where and on what we choose to focus this lens is what I find at stake here.

You have now waded through a rant to get to a conclusion regarding this extended paper's topics: Orlando, corporate space, the Holy Land Experience, brandscapes, historiography, ghosts, mass produced materials, copyright, open sourcing academia, junkspace, film, phenomenology, and hopeful pilgrims. The Holy Land Experience embodies grace. It brims with ornament, perhaps hastily produced, and performances that reference history. This representational past is something that every pilgrim drawn to the park, even teenage stoners, want to see. Experiencing something that people underwent so long ago is a process with timeless resonance. Such returns happen in order to reflect upon and better our present. The park's tawdry attempt to move Christians proves to me that corporate control is effective inasmuch, in spite of itself, it furnishes revelation.

Through such analyses, I am trying to encourage myself, my readers, and others to see the historical and contemporary worlds through a new framing device, one aimed at revealing something other than the critical, and with this device to head into the wider world. The process leading to this goal remains unarguably historiographical for it responds to decades, maybe centuries, of scholarship in architectural history and many other disciplines within the humanities. Such work either critiques sites like the Holy Land Experience and more typically canonical environments for concealing malevolence underneath

aesthetic rigor, or the lack thereof. Another type of scholarship dryly assesses formal characteristics and may even acknowledge grace, but its tone betrays a lack of revelation, the rehearsal of rather than the search for meaning. An admittedly D-grade, crappy theme park on the brink of closing led me to this conclusion.



Figures 12, 13, and 14: on top, a female pilgrim singing along to the morning prayer service; on the bottom, two postcards of, left, the Zion's Hope passion play--notably more violent--and, right, TBN's passion play (author's photo, 2013; both postcards from Trinity Broadcasting Network, 2011)

My archive took me somewhere unexpected. I, at first, wanted to cynically look at the park as a piece of postmodern shit that reflected everything wrong with America today (and yesterday). But my cameras and my eyes showed me something else, a history littered with contradictions but unified by users' revelatory experiences. The above three images may be seen as presenting two seemingly divergent histories, on the top a photo taken by me (fig. 12) and on the bottom two postcards produced by Trinity Broadcasting Network (figs. 13 and 14).

The reveler, captured in a slipshod fashion, sways and sings along to the morning prayer service. She is enclosed in a plaster and concrete replica of the Temple of Jerusalem. She does not seem to notice let alone care that the stone wall behind her consists of paint on a surface, is even interrupted by a door with the same pattern. The two postcards depict performances put on by the park, both undynamic compared to our sandaled heroine. These two corporate photos may be seen as representations of a top-down rather than a bottom-up history. The three images' seemingly divergent aims converge because they seek to directly expose pilgrims to events they have only read about; they all concern visceral, corporeal revelation. And then there is a spiritual or religious way of viewing every image. This perspective imbues my archive, photographic and filmic, with multifarious purposes, connecting performers that re-enact biblical history with viewers and, through cameras as well as the eyes of all involved, creates a new history. The archival task, its capturing of and engaging with re-presentation, even connects to the life of Christ and the act of communion: "To make an image is to resurrect a soul--invisible counterpart of the (mimetic) world."¹²⁸

I have made moving and static images to counteract the deficiencies I encountered in researching

¹²⁸ Taussig, *Mimesis*, 111. Singularly defining a word like mimesis, or photography, is not my aim. These words' meanings should shift, reader to reader, as each person re-interprets, re-experiences, and re-presents (to themselves) my archive. Is this not the point of creating an archive? Taussig valorizes this sort of meaning making: in the Cuna language, Dulegaya, the word *purpaa* translates as soul, spirit, semen, shadow, photograph, menstrual blood, speech, Origin Histories, and deep meaning of curing chants (102).

Orlando's cultural history and the 'ghost' of Zion's Hope: the aesthetic and historiographical manipulation of the Holy Land Experience and its metropolitan context relies upon the conscious alteration of archives or the refusal to document the present for future examination. Corporations like TBN fear archives, especially publicly accessible ones, because true rather than fabricated narratives may emerge from these research spaces and undermine a company's public image and its income. Perhaps copyrighted space resists being historicized because its owners cannot reap immediate profits from a largely academic discipline. Following a similar logic, products no longer performing their capitalist duty, earning profits, are destroyed not preserved. Striving for this ahistorical market mentality renders commodities contemporary, desirable, expendable. In a regional market saturated with entertainment and unfocused on explicitly religion, TBN protects the Holy Land Experience in order to maintain its meager attendance rates. The Holy Land no longer functions in the present but in the past, its own recent one rather than the biblical one. We may "resurrect" the park by experiencing, archiving, and re-experiencing its spaces, continuously bringing it back into the present.

Now, let us combine my many points. After constructing our own archives and explicitly inserting ourselves into the resulting historiographical concerns, we must move ourselves and our scholarship towards something unexpected. You choose this last component. Now let us literally synthesize a mass-produced object, a theory, and a popular cultural artifact to produce a personal belief, one gleaned through an experiential archive. On the back of one of the postcards above, we should begin to write a text that moves beyond what feminist historian Donna Haraway has critiqued as the "scolding consciousness of critical theory" and towards something pop prophet Britney Spears once crooned, "I must confess, I still believe", if not in God then, as I have found, in the grace of the everyday.¹²⁹

¹²⁹ "Donna Haraway, "Cyborgs, Dogs, and Companion Species 2000 1/9," video clip, accessed April 3, 2013, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yxHIKmMI7Q>. Despite her popular placement under the umbrella of critical theory, Haraway insists upon her positive approach to topics conventionally handled pessimistically. Cf. Britney Spears, "...Baby One More Time," ...*Baby One More Time*, 1999 by Jive Music.

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